THE THREE SACRAMENTS OF INITIATION

LABAUCHE

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2025

https://archive.org/details/threesacramentso0000revl

THE THREE SACRAMENTS OF INITIATION

TYPOGRAPHIE FIRMIN-DIDOT ET Cie. — PARIS.

236
L

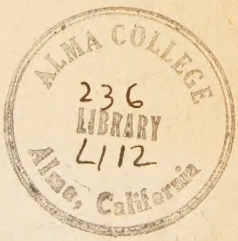
THE THREE SACRAMENTS OF INITIATION

BAPTISM
CONFIRMATION — HOLY EUCHARIST

BY

REV. L. LABAUCHE, S.S.

Authorized Translation



BLASE BENZIGER & C°

NEW-YORK

1922

9223

NIHIL OBSTAT

ARTHUR J. SCANLAN,
Censor librorum.

IMPRIMATUR

† PATRICK J. HAYES, D. D.
Archbishop of New-York.

New-York, Feast of the Annunciation, 1922.

PREFACE

Our method in this work on the three sacraments of initiation : Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist is one, often approved by those competent to judge. Each thesis opens with a precise explanation of the dogma as defined or taught by the Church. Then the classic proofs follow; the first in most cases is derived from the doctrine of Holy Scripture; the second from the teaching of the Fathers of the Church, while the third is made up by theological reasoning. All our dogmas, indeed, are proved in two ways; positively, by presenting the revealed teaching of God as found in Holy Scripture and Tradition, and proposed as such by the Church; and rationally,—the latter proof consists in explaining and searching the doctrine by the aid of Scholastic Philosophy. These two proofs are necessary. A merely positive theology would be incomplete, whilst a strictly rational theology would be insufficient.

The originality of our method consists in this : in our exposition of the positive doctrine we study the various revelations found in Holy Scripture, according to their chronological order, and we record, according to the same order, the teaching of those revealed doctrines as found in the Fathers

of the Church. We do not write the history of a proof, but we give the proof itself in historical form. So, also, in developping our argument from reason, we try to give not the history of an argument, but the argument itself.

L. L.

CONTENTS

Pages.

INTRODUCTION. — A sacrament defined; why seven sacraments..... 1

I

BAPTISM

The sacrament of Baptism..... 5

CHAPTER I

THE INSTITUTION OF BAPTISM

History of the controversy..... 7

ARTICLE I

Our Documents

General description. — The Baptism of John the Baptist. — The Baptism of Christ. — Baptism in the Gospels; — in the Acts of the Apostles. — Baptism in the Epistles of St. Paul..... 8

ARTICLE II

The Controversy about the Institution of Baptism

The question. — First objection : Answer. — Second objection : Answer. — Third objection : Answer. — Fourth objection : Answer. — Conclusion..... 15

CHAPTER II

THE CONSTITUTIVE ELEMENTS OF THE BAPTISMAL RITE

Pages.
Matter and form of Baptism..... 29

ARTICLE I

Baptismal water

The errors of Protestants. — The definition of the Council of Trent. — Prescriptions of the Church. — History of the baptismal water..... 30

ARTICLE II

The baptismal ablution

Prescriptions of the Church. — History of baptismal ablution..... 34

ARTICLE III

The form of Baptism

Prescriptions of the Church. — History of the form of baptism. — The first part of the baptismal form : The invocation of the Trinity. — The second part of the baptismal form : The expression of the act of baptism. 40

CHAPTER III

THE EFFECTS OF BAPTISM

History of the controversy..... 50

ARTICLE I

The regeneration of the soul by Baptism

The Doctrine of the Church. — Holy Scripture. — The doctrine of the Fathers. — The doctrine of St. Thomas..... 51

ARTICLE II

The efficacy of the baptismal rite

The Doctrine of the Church. — Holy Scripture. — The tradition of the Fathers. — The doctrine of the Scholastics..... 61

CHAPTER IV

THE MINISTER OF BAPTISM

Pages.

Prescriptions of the Church : for private baptism, for solemn baptism. — The minister of baptism in history 67

CHAPTER V

THE RECIPIENT OF BAPTISM

General idea 82

ARTICLE I

The necessity of Baptism

The doctrine of the Church. — Holy Scripture. — The tradition of the Fathers. — The technical teaching of the Scholastics 83

ARTICLE II

Infant Baptism

General idea. — The errors of the Protestants of the 16th century. — Protestantism condemned by the Council of Trent. — Infants who die without baptism excluded from the beatific vision. — Exempt from suffering. 91

ARTICLE III

The dispositions required to receive Baptism

The ordinary dispositions. — The baptism of heretics, — of the children of Jews or infidels, — of adult infidels 99

CHAPTER VI

THE LITURGY OF BAPTISM

The admission to baptism. — The preparation for baptism. — The administration of baptism. — The complement to baptism. — Regulations relative to the liturgy of baptism 106

II

CONFIRMATION

Page.
The sacrament of Confirmation 115

CHAPTER I

THE INSTITUTION OF CONFIRMATION

The question. — Protestant errors, — condemned by the council of Trent. — Holy Scripture. — Tradition. — Scholastic theology 116

CHAPTER II

THE RITE OF CONFIRMATION

Prescriptions of the Church. — Has the rite of Confirmation prescribed by the Church always been in use? — Solutions 141

CHAPTER III

THE EFFECTS OF CONFIRMATION

The doctrine. — Holy Scripture. — Tradition. — The doctrine of St. Thomas 149

CHAPTER IV

THE MINISTER OF CONFIRMATION

The doctrine of the Church. — History of the question 157

CHAPTER V

THE RECIPIENT OF CONFIRMATION

Doctrine of the Church. — Historical sketch 162

CHAPTER VI

THE LITURGY OF CONFIRMATION

Preparation. — Administration. — Conclusion 166

III

THE EUCHARIST

Pages.

The Eucharist, sacrifice and sacrament..... 169

CHAPTER I

THE INSTITUTION OF THE HOLY EUCHARIST

The controversy stated..... 172

ARTICLE I

The Eucharistic texts in the New Testament

General description. — The sixth chapter of St. John's Gospel. — The accounts of the Institution. — The disciples at Emmaus. — The breaking of bread in the Acts of the Apostles. — Participation in the sacrifice by the consumption of the victim..... 172

ARTICLE II

The Controversy about the Institution of the Holy Eucharist

The question..... 182

§ I

THE HISTORICAL VALUE OF THE ACCOUNTS OF ST. PAUL AND ST. LUKE

Objections. — Answers to the objections..... 184

§ II

THE HISTORICAL VALUE OF THE ACCOUNTS OF ST. MATTHEW AND ST. MARK

Objections. — Answers to the objections..... 187

§ III

THE SIXTH CHAPTER OF ST. JOHN'S GOSPEL

Historical value. — Two solutions. — Criticism of the first solution. — Criticism of the second solution. — A third solution..... 193

§ IV

CRITICISM OF A FEW OF THE RATIONALISTIC THEORIES

Rationalistic Theories. — The Eucharist was not borrowed from paganism. — The Eucharist is not merely the product of evolution among the first Christian communities. — The Eucharist did not arise from the faith of St. Paul..... 201

CHAPTER II

THE REAL PRESENCE

Pages.

Definition and statement of the dogma..... 212

ARTICLE I

The New Testament.

General Idea. — The Promise of the Eucharist. — The Accounts of the Institution. — The Jewish Paschal Rite in the time of Our Lord. — The Institution of the Eucharist by our Savior. — The Formulæ of the Consecration of the bread and wine. — The doctrine of the real presence found in the accounts of the institution. — The celebration of the Eucharist..... 213

ARTICLE II

Tradition.

General Idea..... 230

§ I

THE APOSTOLIC FATHERS

The Apostolic Fathers and the doctrine of the real presence. — The doctrine of The Twelve Apostles. — St. Clement of Rome. — St. Ignatius of Antioch..... 231

§ II

ST. JUSTIN

St. Justin and the doctrine of the real presence. — Eucharistic testimony of St. Justin. — The *Fractio panis* of the cemetery of Priscilla. — St. Justin and the Cult of Mithra..... 237

§ III

ST. IRENÆUS

The gnosis of the Marcionites. — The Eucharistic testimony of St. Irenaeus. 249

§ IV

THE ALEXANDRIAN SCHOOL

Faith and Gnosis. — Clement of Alexandria. — Origen. — St. Dionysius of Alexandria..... 251

§ V

Pages.

THE GREEK LITERATURE OF THE FOURTH CENTURY

General Survey. — Two anonymous writings. — The anaphora of Serapion. — St. Athanasius. — St. Cyril of Jerusalem. — The Apostolic Constitutions. — The great Cappadocians. — St. John Chrysostom..... 257

§ VI

THE LATIN FATHERS OF THE THIRD AND FOURTH CENTURIES

Latin Theology versus Greek Theology. — Tertullian. — St. Cyprian. — St. Hilary of Poitiers. — St. Ambrose. — The Roman Canon..... 271

§ VII

ST. AUGUSTINE

The Sacrament of the Eucharist according to St. Augustine. — The teaching of St. Augustine on the real presence. — Explanation of some difficult texts..... 281

ARTICLE III

Protestant Symbolism.

Ratramnus, Berengarius and Gerland : the three precursors of protestant symbolism. — Different forms of protestant symbolism. — The definition of the Council of Trent..... 291

CHAPTER III

TRANSUBSTANTIATION

Catholic dogma defined and stated..... 300

ARTICLE I

The fact of Transubstantiation.

General Idea. — The New Testament. — Testimony of the Fathers of the first four centuries. — The Dogma of transubstantiation and Antiochean Christology in the fifth century. — St. Cyril of Alexandria. — From St. Cyril to Peter Lombard. — The Berengarian Controversy. — The theory of Impanation or Companation. — The definition Council of Trent..... 303

ARTICLE II

The Nature of Transubstantiation.

General Idea. — The teaching of the Schoolmen. — The initial term. — The final term. — The transubstantiative act. — The Cartesian explanation of the dogma of Transubstantiation. — Leibniz and the dogma of transubstantiation. — Philosophical and dogmatic conclusions concerning the doctrine of transubstantiation..... 317

ARTICLE III

The manner of Christ's presence under the accidents of bread and wine

Pages.

General Idea. — The definition of the Council of Trent. — Theological explanation. — An objection. — The two solutions of St. Thomas and Suarez. — Jesus in the Eucharist..... 329

ARTICLE IV

The permanence of Christ under the accidents of bread and wine.

General Idea. — History of the doctrine. — The Protestant theory. — The definition of the Council of Trent. — A few liturgical rules..... 338

CHAPTER IV

THE SACRAMENT OF THE EUCHARIST

The Sacrament of the Eucharist defined..... 343

ARTICLE I

The constitutive elements of the Sacrament of the Eucharist.

The matter and form of the Sacrament of the Eucharist..... 344

§ I

THE REMOTE MATTER OF THE SACRAMENT OF THE EUCHARIST

The Decree to the Armenians. — Practical rules concerning the Eucharistic bread and wine. — The symbolical meaning of both..... 344

§ II

THE FORM OF THE SACRAMENT OF THE EUCHARIST

he Decree to the Armenians. — The words of consecration of the bread and wine..... 353

ARTICLE II

The effects of the Sacrament of the Eucharist

General Doctrine on the effects of the Eucharist. — Communion makes us participate in the sacrifice of Christ. — Through communion we are incorporated in our Savior. — The Eucharist, the food of supernatural life. — The effects of the Holy Eucharist on the body of the communicant. — The Eucharist fosters true Catholic life. — Conclusion..... 364

ARTICLE III

The recipient of the Sacrament of the Eucharist.

Questions to be solved..... 380

§ I

THE NECESSITY OF COMMUNION

Pages.
Necessity of means for salvation, or merely necessity of precept. — The divine precept of communion. — The ecclesiastical precept..... 382

§ II

THE COMMUNION OF CHILDREN

The old and new discipline of the Church. — The decree *Quam singulari*. 389

§ III

THE REQUIRED DISPOSITIONS

The state of grace, the Eucharistic fast..... 393

IV

FREQUENT COMMUNION.

The practice of communion from the beginning of Christianity to the Council of Trent. — The practice of communion from the Council of Trent to the condemnation of the Jansenists..... 403
The rules of Saint Liguori regarding weekly, frequent, and daily communion. — The doctrinal decree of the sacred Congregation of the Council of December 20, 1905. — Conclusion..... 409

ARTICLE IV

The Cultus of the Blessed Sacrament.

The Blessed Sacrament. — The cultus of the Blessed Sacrament. History 414

CHAPTER V

THE EUCHARISTIC SACRIFICE

Sacrifice defined..... 423

ARTICLE I

The Eucharistic Sacrifice is a true sacrifice.

Calvary and the Altar..... 427

§ I

THE EXISTENCE OF THE EUCHARISTIC SACRIFICE

Teaching of the Church..... 430

I

HOLY SCRIPTURE

Pages.

General Idea. — The typical sacrifice of Melchisedech. — The prophecy of Malachias. — The Savior instituted the Eucharist as a sacrifice..... 432

II

TRADITION

General Idea. — The Apostolic Fathers. — The Fathers of the second century. — The Greek Fathers of the third and the fourth century. — From Tertullian to St. Gregory the Great..... 438

III

THE AGE OF THEOLOGY

General Idea. — Theological Synthesis. — Protestant errors. — The Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent..... 445

§ II

THE ESSENTIAL ACT OF THE EUCHARISTIC SACRIFICE.

The problem. — Consecration and Communion together. — The consecration of the bread and wine, apart from the communion. — Communion an integral part of the sacrifice..... 449

ARTICLE II

EFFECTS OF THE EUCHARISTIC SACRIFICE.

The four effects of the sacrifice of the Eucharist. — History of the doctrine. — The opposition of the sixteenth century Reformers. — The definition of the Council of Trent. — The efficacy of the Eucharistic Sacrifice. — The extent of this efficacy..... 463

ARTICLE III

THE MINISTER OF THE EUCHARISTIC SACRIFICE.

Doctrine of the Church. — The priest at the altar, minister of Christ and minister of the Church. — The obligations of the priest relatively to the Eucharistic Sacrifice..... 476

ARTICLE IV

THE LITURGY OF THE MASS.

The three principal parts of the Mass. — Mass of the faithful. — Interpolations in the canon of the present Roman Mass. - The Original Primitive Canon of the Mass. — The formation of the present Roman canon. — The Communion prayers. — The Oblation. — The Thanksgiving. — The Mass of the Catechumens. — The Preparation for Mass..... 482

THE SACRAMENTS

INTRODUCTION.

As a consequence of original sin, man had lost grace and the preternatural prerogatives which God had bestowed upon him. Sinful and fallen, he had further debased his condition by a long series of personal transgressions.

In His infinite mercy, God could not consent to abandon man in a state so contrary to his destiny. The Word of God became flesh and by a life of sacrifice consummated by the death on the cross, merited salvation for the human race.

But it remained for man, individually, to reap the fruits of redemption. For this it was necessary to live in union with the Savior, and strive to rule his conduct according to the examples that Christ left him, thereby performing salutary works.

Yet, not only has Christ saved the human race, not only has He given man the power to reap the fruits of His sacrifice, but He has also instituted ordinary means of salvation, to which they must have recourse; these means are the Catholic Church and the sacraments. The sacraments will be the object of the present treatise.

To be saved, then, man must act: he must cooperate wiht

the sufferings of Christ. It is a law made by God and enuntiated by St. Augustine in these pregnant words : « *Qui ergo fecit te sine te, non te justificat sine te. Ergo fecit nescientem, justificat volentem*[1]. » Man, however, is not left to his own initiative, even though assisted by the Holy Ghost. There are some means of justification, held out to him as the ordinary channels of grace. These are called sacraments.

From this point of view — and it is, it seems, the most important — the sacraments appear as a prolongation of the work of the redemption. By His passion and death, Our Savior redeemed all men; by having recourse to the aids which He established, men have a right that the satisfactions and merits of the great sacrifice of expiation be applied to them.

This consideration, which should make us entertain the highest esteem and reverence for our sacraments, brings them out before us, however, only in their general economy. Considered in themselves, they stand out as so many signs and causes of distinct graces. Thus Baptism initiates us into the life of grace; Confirmation makes us soldiers of Christ, enrolling us in His army, through the sacramental character, and equipping us, by the communication of a special grace, for the battles to be fought for the faith : the Eucharist is our spiritual food : Penance restores the life of grace to those who have had the misfortune to lose it : Extreme Unction gives grace to overcome the struggles at the last hour, and washes away, at the same time, the remains of sin : Matrimony gives the grace to persevere in the fulfilment of conjugal duties : the sacrament of holy Orders which imprints the sacerdotal character, develops abundantly the life of grace, that it may bloom forth, above all in zeal for souls.

Each sacrament is the sign or symbol of the grace which it confers, an admirable plan of the Divine Founder.

---

1. Sermo CLXIX, 13, *P. L.* XXXVIII, 923.

Our poor heart necessarily requires that what we love should take form and shape, otherwise we are lost in vagueness, our prayers lack inspiration, our desires have no precision, our good will is wanting in firmness and perseverance. God knows this need of our soul since He created it. As therefore He intended to give us the life of grace — of which we cannot have direct consciousness — to give it under its varied aspects, and to have it increase in us, He decided that this grace should be symbolized by outward signs. That these signs are so simple should not astonish any one : in order that they might be accessible to all men, at all times, and in all countries, it was necessary indeed to choose them from the commonest elements of nature.

There is no serious objection to this doctrine. We meet however with opposition as soon as we assert that the sacraments are causes, as well as signs, of grace. Nearly all objections are due to an incredible ignorance of the subject. It is evident, indeed, that grace, since it is a participation by likeness in the very nature of God, can be produced only by God Himself in the same way as heat can be imparted only by fire. If the sacrament intervenes between God and grace it can only be as an intermediary to transmit the divine action, like the brush in the hand of the artist, and the pen in the hand of the writer. After all, what is there, unworthy of God or grace?

Our seven sacraments are then the ordinary means of making our own the satisfaction and merits of the Redeemer's sacrifice, they are at once signs and causes of seven distinct graces.

Let us remark also that the first three produce the perfect Christian : baptism gives the life of grace; confirmation enrolls us in the army of Christ and gives us strength to endure trials for the faith. Holy Eucharist bestows a grace of spiritual nourishment. Hence, these are the three sacraments of *Christian initiation*, at least for those who have reached the age of discretion. The four other sacraments

either repair the falls which occur, as is the function of penance and extreme unction, or guide the Christian life in one direction or another, as holy Orders and matrimony.

We shall treat at first the *seven sacraments* one after the other, and, if time and circumstances permit, we may conclude with a *sacramental synthesis*. Wherefore, the following divisions :

I. — *Baptism.*

II. — *Confirmation.*

III. — *Holy Eucharist.*

IV. — *Penance.*

V. — *Extreme Unction.*

VI. — *Holy Orders.*

VII. — *Matrimony.*

Conclusion. — *Sacramental Synthesis.*

I

BAPTISM.

Sanctifying grace, or the state of justification, means the entrance of God into our soul, and the production therein of a life wholly supernatural, so as to render the soul a fit abode for His presence. This transformation of the soul from the state of sin to the state of justice is called justification. Justification, then, is a sort of regeneration, or spiritual resurrection. From spiritual death, where original sin had brought it, the soul is awakened — born once again — to the spiritual life.

This spiritual regeneration, in the Savior's plan, depends on the efficacy of a determined rite, which is the sacrament of baptism. Its name is derived from the Greek word βαπτίζειν, which means, literally, to plunge, to immerse, particularly in water, in order to symbolize, or to obtain a certain moral purification. It consists essentially in the washing with water and the accompanying formula : « I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. »

The sacrament of baptism, being the ordinary means of justification, is the sacrament which officially initiates man into the Christian life. It is the first sacrament to be received — the gateway that leads to all the others. To the Schoolmen belongs the glory of having compressed these different elements into the classic definition of the sacrament

of baptism : *Sacramentum Novæ Legis, a Christo institutum, in quo, per externam aquæ ablutionem, cum invocatione Sanctissimæ Trinitatis, homo spiritualiter regeneratur, atque fit capax aliorum sacramentorum.*

These *studies* on baptism will be divided into six chapters :

Chapter I. — *The Institution of Baptism.*

Chapter II. — *The constituent Elements of the Baptismal Rite.*

Chapter III. — *The Effects of Baptism.*

Chapter IV. — *The Minister of Baptism.*

Chapter V. — *The Subject of Baptism.*

Chapter VI. — *The Liturgy of Baptism.*

CHAPTER I.

THE INSTITUTION OF BAPTISM.

All the early Protestants admitted that baptism was instituted by Christ. Their principal challenge was flung at the efficacy of the rite. Luther said that it was either a trumpet call to the faith that justifies, or a symbol of purification by faith, but in any case, if not a meaningless, at least a useless rite, as long as the subject had not attained, by a personal act a trust in the saving merits of Jesus Christ. Calvin comparing the baptism of Jesus with that of John the Baptist, attributed to each the same efficacy. However, while the baptism of John symbolized the remission of sins by faith in Christ to come, that of Jesus was the symbol of the remission of sins by faith in Christ already come. In a word, Calvin identified the two rites.

The encyclopedists of the eighteenth century were not loath to concede that Christ had enjoined baptism upon His disciples; they even maintained that the idea of water which cleanses and the concurrent idea of its moral symbolism were not exclusively Christian possessions, since they appear under one form or another in the Jewish ceremonial as well as in most of the pagan religions. But this consideration, which, in the opinion of the encyclopedists, depreciated the worth of Christian baptism is of no importance. The Savior chose a rite of which indeed all religions felt the need, made it distinctively His own and infused therein the supernatural power to cleanse from sin.

Liberal Protestants deny that Christ instituted Christian baptism. It is a rite, so they say, independent of Christ's will, which sprang up under various influences amid Christian communities of the first two centuries. The same fundamental assertion is rehearsed by Modernists, who attempt to justify it in their own way. Inasmuch, says Loisy, as the kingdom of God, preached by Jesus Christ, consists only in the imminent destruction of the world that is and the imminent approach of a world to be, how could Christ have thought of founding a Church and of instituting a rite of initiation into this Church? Aware of the great importance attached by Catholic dogma to the baptism of Christ, as recorded in the three Synoptics, Loisy endeavors to show that the wonderful aspect of this baptism is but an invention of the first generation of Christians.

Against these theories of Liberal Protestants and Modernists, we have to show that *Christ really instituted baptism*. Let us, then, first, set forth *our documentary sources*.

ARTICLE I.

Our Documents.

General description. — The texts of the New Testament which refer to baptism may be gathered under several headings. Some refer to *the baptism administered by John the Baptist to his disciples* to prepare them to enter the kingdom; others relate to *the baptism of Christ at the beginning of His public ministry;* others to *Christian baptism*.

The Baptism of John the Baptist. — Attracted by his sermons on the baptism of penance unto the remission of sins, men gathered round the Baptist and were baptized by him in the river Jordan. I baptize with water, he said, but there comes one far mightier than I who will baptize in the Holy Ghost and fire.

Mt., III, 5. Then went out to him Jerusalem and all Judea, and all the country about the Jordan;

6. And were baptized by him in the Jordan, confessing their sins.

11. I, indeed, baptize you in water unto penance, and he that shall come after me, is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear; he shall baptize you in the Holy Ghost, and fire [1].

Mk., I, 4. John was in the desert baptizing, and preaching the baptism of penance, unto remission of sins.

5. And there went out to him all the country of Judea, and all they of Jerusalem, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins.

7. There cometh after me one mightier than I, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and loose.

8. I have baptized you with water, but He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost.

Lk., III, 3. And he (John the Baptist) came into all the country about the Jordan, preaching the baptism of penance for the remission of sins.

16. He said to all : I indeed baptize you with water, but there shall come one mightier than I, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to loose : He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire.

Jn., I, 26. John answered them : I baptize with water, but there hath stood one in the midst of you, whom you know not.

---

1. Certain Gnostic sects imagined that the baptism of the New Law was to be administered by fire, and, under one form or another, they inflicted the pain of fire on those they admitted to membership. A great many of the Fathers understood this baptism of fire, placed by St. John the Baptist, they say, in opposition to spiritual baptism, to mean the fire of hell, to which those who will not receive the baptism of the Holy Ghost will be condemned. This interpretation does not lack probability. John the Baptist, adds, indeed that Jesus, whose fan is in His hand to clean His threshing floor, will burn the chaff with unquenchable fire (Mt., III, 12; Lk., III, 17). It seems quite reasonable to accept, in the same sense, the baptism of fire. Cf. E. Mangenot, *Baptême par le feu*, art. *Baptême*, in *Dict. de Théol. cath.*, vol. II, pp. 355-360.

27. The same is He that shall come after me : the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to loose.
28. These things were done in Bethania, beyond the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

Acts, XIII, 24. John first preaching, before His (Christ's) coming, the baptism of penance to all the people of Israel :
25. And, when John was fulfilling his course he said : I am not he whom you think me to be : but behold there cometh one after me whose shoes of his feet I am not worthy to loose.

The Baptism of Christ. — St. Matthew has left us a rather detailed account of this baptism; St. Mark one of remarkable simplicity; St. Luke, a more general outline; St. John, only the dogmatic conclusion drawn by John the Baptist from his vision.

MT., III, 13. Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to the Jordan, unto John, to be baptized by him.
14. But John stayed him, saying : « I ought to be baptized by thee, and comest thou to me? »
15. And Jesus answering, said to him : « Suffer it to be so now. For so it becometh us to fulfil all justice. » Then he suffered Him.
16. And Jesus being baptized, forthwith came out of the water : and, lo, the heavens were opened to Him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove, and coming upon Him.
17. And behold a voice from heaven saying : « This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. »

MK., I, 9. And it came to pass, in those days, Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized by John in the Jordan.
10. And forthwith coming out of the water, He saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit as a dove descending, and remaining on Him.
11. And there came a voice from heaven : « Thou art my beloved Son; in Thee I am well pleased. »

LK., III, 21. Now it came to pass, when all the people were baptized,

that Jesus also being baptized and praying, heaven was opened.

22. And the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape, as a dove upon Him; and a voice came from heaven : « Thou art my beloved Son; In Thee I am well pleased. »

Jn., I, 32. And John gave testimony saying : « I saw the Spirit coming down, as a dove from heaven, and he remained upon Him.

33. And I knew Him not; but He who sent me to baptize with water, said to me : « He upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining upon Him, He it is that baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. »

34. And I saw, and I gave testimony that this is the Son of God. »

Christian Baptism, as found in the Gospels. — From the closing verses of the Gospels according to St. Matthew and St. Mark it is clear that the apostles were divinely commanded to make all nations Christ's « disciples » by « preaching the Gospel to every creature ». « He that believeth » shall be baptized « in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost », and « he shall be saved », if only he perseveres to the end, and « observes all things whatsoever Jesus hath commanded ».

Mt., xxviii, 18. And Jesus coming, spoke to them, saying : All power is given to me in heaven and on earth.

19. Going, therefore, teach ye all the nations; baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

20. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you : and behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world.

Mk., xvi, 15. And He said to them : Go ye into the whole world and preach the Gospel to every creature.

16. He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved : but he that believeth not shall be condemned.

Baptism according to the Acts of the Apostles. — Here

there is sketched for us the sacrament of baptism as administered by the apostles, by Philip the deacon, and by a disciple called Ananias. Repentance and faith in Jesus Christ, or a previous indwelling of the Holy Ghost were the requirements they exacted for the reception of the sacrament. The baptism of John, it is true, led the soul to the gateway of the kingdom; the baptism of Jesus brought the soul across the threshold. How clearly these followers of Christ realized that with the advent of the kingdom, the baptism of John had disappeared [1]. How well, too, they perceived that the cooling waters of John's baptism in no way dissolved the obligation to receive the Christian rite.

Acts, II, 37. They had compunction in their heart, and said to Peter, and to the rest of the apostles : « What shall we do, men and brethren? »

38. But Peter said to them : « Do penance, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ [1], for the remission of your sins : and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. »

VIII, 12. But when they had believed Philip preaching of the kingdom of God, in the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.

38. And he commanded the chariot (of the eunuch) to stand still : and they went down into the water both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him.

IX, 18-19. And (Saul) rising up, he was baptized; and when he had taken meat he was strengthened.

X, 48. And he (Peter) commanded them (Cornelius and his family) to be baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

---

1. In four different passages of the *Acts* (II, 38; VIII, 16; X, 48; XIX, 2-5) and in I Cor., VI, 11, we read that the Apostles baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. By these words « in the name of Jesus Christ » the baptism instituted by Jesus and endowed by Him with His own grace-giving power is made separate and distinct from the baptism of John.

xvi, 33. And he (the jailer) taking them (Paul and Silas) the same hour of the night, washed their stripes, and himself was baptized and all his house immediately.

xviii, 8. And Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, believed in the Lord, with all his house; and many of the Corinthians hearing, believed, and were baptized.

xix, 4. Then Paul said : John baptized the people with the baptism of penance, saying : That they should believe in Him who was to come after him, that is to say, in Jesus.

5. Having heard these things they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.

xxii, 16. Rise up, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, invoking His name.

Baptism in the Epistles of St. Paul. — After being baptized by Ananias, St. Paul, in turn, baptized some of his own disciples. According to him, baptism is opposed to circumcision. Its effect is to unite us to Jesus Christ and to incorporate us all into His mystical body. More or less completely by itself, and, at all events, without excluding the imposition of hands, baptism imparts the Holy Ghost. In his Epistle to the Hebrews, the efficacy of baptism is at once retraced and carved anew.

Rom., vi, 3. Know you not that all we, who are baptized in Christ Jesus, are baptized in His death?

4. For we are buried together with Him by baptism unto death; that as Christ is risen from the dead by the glory of the Father, so also may we walk in the newness of life.

I Cor., i, 14. I give God thanks, that I baptized none of you but Crispus and Caius.

15. Lest any should say that you were baptized in my name.

16. And I baptized also the household of Stephanas; besides, I know not whether I baptized any other.

VI, 11. And such some of you were; but you are washed, but you are sanctified, but you are justified in the name of Our Lord Jesus Christ and the Spirit of God.

XII, 13. For in one spirit were we all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Gentiles, whether bond or free; and in one spirit we have all been made to drink.

XV, 29. Otherwise what shall they do that are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not again at all? Why are they then baptized for them[1]?

II Cor., I, 21. Now he that confirmeth is with you in Christ, and that hath anointed us, is God.

22. Who also hath sealed us, and given the pledge of the Spirit in our hearts.

Gal., III, 27. For as many of you as have been baptized in Christ, have put on Christ.

Eph., I, 13. In whom you also, after you had heard the word of truth (the Gospel of your salvation) in whom also believing, you were signed with the Holy Spirit of promise.

14. Who is the pledge of our inheritance, unto the redemption of acquisition, unto the praise of his glory.

IV, 5. One Lord, one faith, one baptism.

Col., II, 11. In whom also you are circumcised with circumcision not made by hands in despoiling of the body of the flesh, but in the circumcision of Christ.

---

1. It is pertinent to note, at this juncture, an interesting practice of certain neophytes of Corinth. Lacking a perfect grasp of the Christian doctrine, they deemed it worthy and good to receive baptism in their own person for catechumens who had died without the sacrament of regeneration. And yet by this practice they bespoke their belief in two other dogmas, namely, the resurrection of the dead, and the fruitful application of the good works of the living to the souls of the dead. St. Paul could tolerate it, because it was free from the taint of superstition. Only later was it condemned, when heretics identified it with Christian baptism and regarded it as an efficacious means of salvation. Cf. E. MANGENOT, *Le Baptême pour les morts*, art. *Baptême* dans *Dict. de Théol. cath.*, vol. II, pp. 360-364.

12. Buried with him in baptism, in whom also you are risen again by the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him up from the dead.

Heb., VI, 1. Wherefore leaving the word of the beginning of Christ, let us go on to things more perfect, not laying again the foundation of penance from dead works, and of faith towards God.

2. Of the doctrine of baptisms [1] and imposition of hands, and of the resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.

22. Let us draw near with a true heart in fulness of faith having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with clean water.

ARTICLE II.

The Controversy about the Institution of Baptism.

The Question. — If the texts, already quoted, be interpreted in the light of their inspired and infallible character, — and, indeed, a theologian has a right to do so, — the controversy vanishes : baptism was instituted by Christ. But opponents of this doctrine deny that Scripture is inspired. For the sake of argument therefore the Scriptural passages referred to, will be treated as ordinary historical documents.

At once the following conclusions can be drawn. From the very outset of their ministry, the Apostles made baptism a condition of the Christian initiation. Wherever the Gospel was accepted the Apostles and other ministers of the Word

---

1. The Apostle speaks here, undoubtedly, of the fundamental notions about the efficacy of the different baptisms. Whilst the ablutions practiced by the Jews are mere religious lustrations, Christian baptism, followed as it is, by the imposition of hands, remits sins and infuses the Holy Ghost. Cf. Ch. Ruch, *La Confirmation dans la Sainte Ecriture*, in *Dict. de Théol. cath.*, art. *Confirmation*, vol. III, p. 1007.

were of a single mind in their attitude regarding baptism. As a condition of Christian initiation, both the Apostles and the first Christians attached to it an absolute necessity. Nothing could replace it; neither immediate call by the risen Christ, which made St. Paul the Apostle of the Gentiles, nor an infusion of the Holy Ghost, as may be witnessed in the experience of Cornelius, the centurion, of his relatives and friends. On the other hand, after Christ's resurrection, the Apostles contrasted Christian baptism with that of John the Baptist. The latter they pronounced abrogated, or at any rate, insufficient. The Christian rite alone could remit sins and confer the Holy Ghost. If the Apostles thus felt themselves bound to administer baptism in the name of Jesus to all their followers, because they were convinced that Christian baptism alone remitted sins and conferred the Holy Ghost, whence did they derive this conviction? Could it have been elsewhere than from the teaching and command of the Savior, as indicated in the texts of St. Matthew and St. Mark[1]?

First Objection. — At this point, Liberal Protestants would have us note that the texts of St. Matthew and St. Mark, alluded to, are not historical. The text of St. Matthew contains a too explicit expression of faith in the Holy Trinity to have been written in the first Christian age. It was much later that this belief became a part of the Apostolic tradition. Undoubtedly this addition was made to the text of St. Matthew under liturgical influence, in particular the baptismal liturgy. Moreover, Eusebius who often quotes this passage, reads it first in this way : « Go, teach ye all nations », or again « Go, teach ye all nations in my name, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you ». He uses the received text only after the Council of Nicea (325). If up to that date Eusebius used the shorter reading, was it not because that

1. Mt., xxviii, 18-20; Mk., xvi, 15-16.

was the primitive reading? Nor can the text of St. Mark be historical : for the last verses of this Gospel are not genuine. St. Jerome remarks that it was missing in the Greek manuscripts of his time. Besides, what authority has a solitary text written at a time when baptism was a necessary and characteristic rite of entrance into the Christian faith [1]?

Answer. — The text of St. Matthew contains nothing that is in advance of the doctrinal development of the first century. In some passages, St. Paul has portrayed the three divine Persons perfectly distinct and of the same dignity, testifying, in this way, to their hypostatic character and their divine equality [2].

Moreover, no great importance need be attached to the two different readings — the more ancient of which omits the command to baptize in the three persons of the Trinity — used by Eusebius. The short, so-called Eusebian, reading is found neither in any MS. nor in any version of the New Testament. During the Trinitarian controversies of the fourth century, orthodox writers quoted constantly the text of St. Matthew such as we have it, while the Arians never questioned its authenticity. The Fathers of the third century — Tertullian and Origen — quoted our text, and do not even seem to know of the « Eusebian » reading. Finally, as Lebreton has shown, the shorter reading can be accounted for by the purpose of Eusebius, who did not intend to quote the whole, but only part of the text [3].

Concerning the last verses of St. Mark, from the ninth

---

1. Cf. F. C. Conybeare, *The Eusebian form of the Text Mt.*, 28, 19. *Zeitschrift fur N. S. Wissenschaft*, 1901, pp. 275-288. — A. Sabatier, *Les religions d'autorité et la religion de l'esprit*, 1904, pp. 101-103. — Ch. Guignebert, *Manuel d'Histoire ancienne du Christianisme*, 1907, pp. 233-235.

2. Cf. Gal., iv, 6; II Cor., i, 21-22; *ibid.*, xiii, 13; Tit., iii, 4-7.

3. Cf. J. Lebreton, *Les origines du dogme de la Trinité*, note E, 1919, pp. 553-564. Cf. Tixeront, *Apologetical Studies*, 1917, page 29-31.

verse of the sixteenth chapter, it is true that St. Jerome calls attention to their absence in the older manuscripts (*Omnibus Graeciæ libris pene hoc capitulum in fine non habentibus*) [1].

Indeed, they are not found either in the *Sinaiticus* or the *Vaticanus*. But they are met with in all other manuscripts, especially in all the Western manuscripts. The baptismal text of St. Mark is not an isolated exception; since there is a parallel text in the last verses of the Gospel according to St. Matthew, and since both texts express an act of Our Lord which must necessarily be admitted, if we would account for the conviction and the practice of the Apostles.

Second Objection. — Baptism was a custom prevalent in Judaism. It was a part of that initiatory rite by which the proselyte was admitted into the Jewish faith. It had a meaning akin to purification and renovation, and as such, undoubtedly had been understood by St. John the Baptist. Jesus submitted Himself to it, but without changing it in any way, and the disciples kept the baptism of John without any objection on the part of Jesus. After the disappearance of the Master, they transformed it and made it the baptism of Jesus [2].

Answer. — It is an historical fact that the Apostles administered the baptism of Jesus from the very beginning of their ministry. If Christ be not the author of this baptism, its source must be sought elsewhere. The explanation of our adversaries is incorrect and improbable.

Of those proselytes or Gentiles who were turning towards the God of Israel in the closing days of Judaism in Palestine, two classes must be distinguished. There were the proselytes in the broad sense who believed and prac-

1. Epist. CXX.
2. Cf. A. Sabatier, *op. cit.*, p. 102. — Ch. Guignebert, *op. cit.*, p. 233.

ticed Jewish morality, and there were the proselytes, strictly so called, who followed the law of Israel in its entirely (proselytes of justice). In addition to circumcision, these latter received a baptism of water, at least from the first century before Christ. This rite was administered in accordance with an ancient Jewish belief that contact with pagans rendered one unclean. Hence before being admitted to the Jewish society, these had to be legally purified. Here indeed is the sole source of the baptism of the proselytes [1]. The wide difference between the baptism of the proselytes and the baptism of John is easily seen. It was not the proselytes whom John baptized, but the children of Israel. He did not intend to give them legal purity, since they possessed it already, but to purify them internally, in order to prepare them to enter the Messianic kingdom [2].

Inspired by the Holy Ghost, John the Baptist appealed to Sacred Scripture, where very often pardon had been presented as an ablution, and where sometimes the ablution had really been designated by God, as a means to obtain grace [3].

---

1. Cf. E. Stapfer, *La Palestine*, ch. ix.

2. Tradition varies as to the efficacy of the baptism of John, when compared with Christian baptism. Among the Fathers, some accepted it as a mere outward rite; others, as Tertullian, Origen and St. John Chrysostom, as only predisposing to penance. St. Augustine attached to it a greater efficacy. Cf. *Contra litteras Petiliani*, l. II, xxxvi; *P. L.*, XLIII, 289-290. According to St. Thomas, the baptism of John led men to sin no more, *inducebat homines ad abstinendum a peccatis* (Cf. *Sum. Theol.*, III, q. xxxix, a. 2, ad 2um). This could only be effected by grace. For those who received it with sentiments of penance and of faith in the near approach of the kingdom, the baptism of John obtained a grace of renovation, of purification of heart, which was not yet regeneration, but only a preparation for it. It was « the baptism of penance for the remission of sins » (Cf. Mk. i, 4), that is to say the baptism which prepared for the kingdom those who repented of their sins and had faith in the imminence of the kingdom, whereas the baptism of Jesus is the baptism which gives entrance into the kingdom already existing. Hence it is clear that, when the kingdom was once established and solemnly proclaimed in the foundation of the Church, the baptism of John had no further reason for existence.

3. Cf. Is., i. 16; Ezech., xxxvi, 25; Zach., xiii, 1; II *Kings*, v, 10; *Exodus*, xxx, 17-21; *Leviticus*, xiv; *Numbers*, viii, 6-7; xxxi, 2-124. In the last three, we find

If the baptism of John prepared one to enter the kingdom that was to come, the baptism of Jesus, by the remission of sins and the infusion of the Holy Ghost, gave entrance into that kingdom, that is to say, the Church. The baptism of John and of Our Lord Jesus are then essentially different from the baptism of the proselytes. Besides, how could the Apostles think, even for a moment, of administering a baptism analogous to that of the proselytes? Had they not heard Christ severely criticize those Jewish beliefs, namely, that contact with certain people, and especially with pagans, would render them unclean; and had they not seen Him hold as of no account the ritual obligation which was the consequent expressions of such belief[1]?

Third Objection. — After all, they say, it will be observed that the words, placed by St. Matthew on the lips of the risen Christ, rather suppose baptism to be already existing, than to be something newly prescribed. This can also be said of the baptismal text that is found in the last verses of St. Mark. Now, if those two texts do not treat of the institution of baptism, where in the Gospel is mention made of such institution by Christ[2]?

Answer. — According to the common teaching of the Fathers and theologians, the very day on which Christ was baptized witnessed the institution of the sacrament of baptism. The texts of St. Matthew and St. Mark are but a promulgation of an existent institution, indeed of one, if we may say so, of which Jesus Himself had made trial[3]. This

---

that certain ablutions are mentioned as possessing an official and obligatory character.

1. Mt., xxiii, 25; Cf. A. d'Alès, art. *Initiation Chrétienne*, in *Dict. Apol. de la Foi Cath.*, vol. II, pp. 794, 795.

2. A. Sabatier, *op. cit.*, p. 101-104.

3. Maldonatus explains this in these words : *Addere possumus voluisse Christum, antequam doceret, quodammodo initiari, et, ut ita dicam, seipsum*

declaration of tradition and of the theologians is based on Scriptural texts taken from the three Synoptics and from St. John.

Of the four accounts of the baptism of Christ, St. Mark's is the simplest[1]. The reference to the Trinity is evident : the voice of the Father is heard, Jesus is called His well-beloved Son, the Holy Ghost comes down in the form of a dove. But, it is not John the Baptist who brings the Spirit down from heaven. He confers only the baptism of water. It was because Jesus was there that the Holy Ghost had come. Here, then, is the first baptism of the New Law, because here is the first baptism of the Spirit, the very one announced by the Precursor to be the baptism of the Messias[2]. Moreover, the emphasis which the author lays upon his text justifies this interpretation. Jesus had not yet gone out of the water, nor was the baptism as yet completed, when the dove descended from heaven, rested upon the Lord and fecundated the water, according to a rabbinical tradition which attributed fecundation to the Spirit of God, moving over the waters of creation[3].

The same is implied in St. Luke[4]. The Savior receives baptism. Coming out of the water, He prays and whilst He is praying, the Holy Ghost descends upon Him. This scene recalls that incident described in the *Acts*[5], where the Holy Ghost was conferred upon the converts of Samaria as a complement to their baptism, and through the imposition of

---

Christum docturus, Christianus fieri, si quo modo Johannis baptismus facere Christianum poterat, quia viam ad Christum præmonstrabat. Cf. *Comment. in Matth.*, c. III, 13, *De Joan. Bapt.*

1. Mk., I, 9-11.

2. *Ibid.*, I, 8.

3. The flight of the Spirit was compared to the flight of the dove soaring over its young ones to vivify them, and touching them occasionally with its wings. Cf. *Gen.*, I, 2.

4. Lk., III, 21, 22.

5. *Acts*, VIII, 14-17.

hands, indeed, but only after the Apostles Peter and John had prayed.

In the same way should we interpret the narrative of St. Matthew[1], which belongs to the same tradition as the narratives of the other Synoptics. Besides, the episode which is found in his Gospel alone, seems to show in the baptism of Christ the first baptism of the New Law. « I ought to be baptized by Thee, said the Precursor, and comest Thou to me? » Undoubtedly this is a confession of humility. But can it not be said that John the Baptist knew his baptism was no longer needed? Why did Christ seek the baptism of water? It was rather the Baptist who needed the baptism of the Spirit. And Jesus answering, said to him : « Suffer it to be now. » Does not the word « now » toll the death knell of Jewish baptism? Is it not as if He said : « Suffer it to be so now, the next time it will be the baptism of the Spirit »? And the next time is when Jesus comes up from the water. Here is the meeting of the rite of the Law and the rite of faith : the last Jewish baptism is the first Christian baptism, just as the last paschal supper was the first mass. And so the kingdom is established, for Christ lives and He has made His baptism the sign, the seal (σφραγίς) which will stamp the new converts.

We find in the Gospel of St. John a definition of baptism which shows that the author understood the accounts of the baptism of Jesus in no other way. « Amen, amen, I say to thee, unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God[2]. » It is one of the sayings of our Lord to Nicodemus. Here, without the shadow of a doubt, we possess the definition of Christian baptism. Is it not also — if we except the regeneration — that of the baptism of Christ? The

1. Mt., III, 13-17.
2. Jn., III, 5.

baptism of Christ is, as it were, an illustration of this text. If He who is without sin, wished to give the example, wished to receive the baptism of water and the Holy Ghost, Christians must submit to it also. They will be led into the kingdom by baptism, because Jesus Himself thus entered, and thereby gave to the rite its efficacy[1].

Fourth Objection. — According to Loisy, the baptism of Christ considered as an historical fact amounts to very little.

John preached repentance and administered baptism for the remission of sins, in view of the great judgment that was to take place and the kingdom of God that was to be. « Like many others, and perhaps more intensely than they, Jesus was inspired with the thought of that reign of justice the advent of which was preached by the Baptist. He received baptism and rested awhile in the desert[2]. »

When the person of Jesus had been idealized by Christian belief, the fact of His baptism by John became

---

1. Though this conclusion, viz., that the institution of baptism goes back to the baptism of Christ, be very attractive, it must not, by any means, be considered as a dogma. It is a theological opinion *probable*, even *the most probable*, guaranteed by the authority of St. Thomas (Cf. *Sum. Theol.*, III, q. LXVI, a. 2), accepted by the Catechism of the Council of Trent without question (Cf. second part, ch. II, p. 19) and seemingly based on Holy Scripture. But other opinions are held by theologians. Hugh of St.-Victor says that baptism was first administered by the Precursor, then by Christ, and then by His disciples; but it was universally established only from the time of the sending of the Apostles (Cf. *De Sacramentis*, I, II, part VI, c. IV: *P.L.*, CLXXV, 449). Albert the Great looks at the question from several aspects. Christ determined the *matter* of the sacrament at the moment of His baptism; the *form*, in the mission He gave to the Apostles (Cf., Mt., XXVIII, 19); the *end* in His discourse with Nicodemus (Cf. Jn., III, 5); the *efficacy* on the cross, when blood and water flowed from His side; finally, the *saving effect* in His farewell words to the Apostles (Cf. Mk., XVI, 16, Mt., XXVIII, 19). Cf. *In* IV *Sent.*, dist. III, a. 3. Duns Scotus believed that the sacrament was instituted, not at the baptism of Jesus, nor during His talk with Nicodemus, but at any rate, before the passion — the precise time of the institution not being known. Cf. *In* IV *Sent.*, dist., III, q. IV.

2. A. Loisy, *Jésus et la Tradition évangélique*, pp. 58-59.

a stumbling block. Why should the Messias have received the baptism of penance? It was admitted that the baptism of Jesus by John was really the baptism of Christ, His Messianic consecration by the descent of the Holy Spirit[1]. The elements needed to foreshadow this first belief were at hand. Had not the prophets announced that the Messias would be filled with the Spirit of *Yahweh?* Was not the dove the accepted symbol of that Spirit? The vision of the Savior was natural enough, for had not the prophets a similar vision at the beginning of their ministry? Finally the voice which was heard in the heavens summed up the words which *Yahweh,* in the second psalm and in Isaias, addressed to His chosen one. To the Jews, the voice of God coming from the heavens was in no way a surprise.

St. Justin, on the other hand, relates, in his dialogue with Trypho, a Jewish tradition to the effect that the Messias was to remain unknown to himself and to others until his anointing by Elias[2]. Christ, in his preaching, had compared John the Baptist to Elias, who had been announced by Malachias[3] and the son of Sirach[4] as the precursor of the Messianic age[5]. Nothing was easier, then, than to regard baptism not merely as the inaugural vision of our Lord but as his very consecration. As regards Jesus, « John was supposed to have played the rôle which Tradition had assigned to Elias and which Jesus himself had confessed

---

1. *Ibid.*, p. 236. Cf. *Les Evangiles synoptiques*, I, pp. 408-409.

2. Cf. *Dial.*, VIII, XLIX. In the Old Testament we read of Samuel choosing and consecrating Saul and David as kings (I Sam., x, 1; xvi, 13). Eliseus commands one of his disciples to anoint Jehu, king of Israel (II *Reg.*, ix, 1-10). It was from these facts undoubtedly, that the following Jewish tradition was derived: God will inspire Elias so that he may recognize and consecrate the Messias. Hence we can understand how Jesus could compare John the Baptist to Elias.

3. Malach., iv, 5.

4. *Ecclus.*, xlviii, 10-11.

5. Mk., ix, 11-13; Mt., xvii, 10-13.

to be that of John in relation to the kingdom[1] ». The baptism in the Jordan revealed Christ to John the Baptist and to all[2]. It remained only to suppose, with St. Matthew, that John the Baptist had known Christ even before His baptism[3].

Thus do we get the elements of the evangelical rites. « The symbol, then, has been gradually wedded with history or substituted for it. Not all is false in the mythical hypothesis of Strauss, but the work of tradition has been much more complex and varied than the celebrated critic supposed[4]. » At any rate, it is impossible for the historian to see in the baptism of Jesus by John the Baptist the institution of Christian baptism. As it is related in the Gospels, the baptism of Jesus is a tenet of faith, not a fact of history.

Answer. — At first sight, a synthesis of this kind is attractive enough. To pass a fair judgment upon it, we cannot deny its elements, which beyond doubt are indisputable, but we must weigh the importance attached to them.

If the accounts of the baptism of Christ be considered in a general way, they do not assume the character of a grand revelation which the *Dialogue with Trypho* attributes to them. The presence and the participation of the crowd are not clearly indicated. And if the baptism of Christ was not the revelation of Christ to the multitude, it was not, either, the revelation of Christ to Himself. The voice from heaven did not create Jesus the Messias; it only announced Him to be the Messias. Neither did the descent of the Spirit signify that Jesus Christ, at His baptism, was created Son of God.

---

1. A. Loisy, *Jésus et la Tradition évangélique*, p. 237. Cf. *Les Evangiles synoptiques*, I, p. 660.
2. Jn., I, 31.
3. Mt., III, 13-15.
4. A. Loisy, *Jésus et la Tradition évangélique*, p. 239.

Only tradition, they affirm, can have developed the rôle attributed to John the Baptist at the moment of the baptism of Jesus. The message which he dispatched later to Jesus[1] would appear to mean that John had hardly known him, but had heard about him, especially in prison, through his disciples, when they reported to him the things accomplished by Jesus. Would this be possible if the Precursor had seen the Spirit descend upon Jesus at His baptism, and above all, if he had recognized Him as the Anointed of the Lord? But this objection is not conclusive, for the question proposed by John to Jesus can just as well be explained if we suppose that the humble ministry of the Lord severely tried the faith of the Baptist who awaited a glorious coming of the Messias, as judge of the good and the wicked. They rejoin that it is on account of his extraordinary works that John supposed him to be the Messias : it was to have this supposition confirmed that he sent his disciples[2]. This remark is correct, but we must remember that the works of Christ though extraordinary, were far from coming up to the expectations of the Jews. So a certain amount of doubt might remain. To those whom John had sent, Jesus answered by the complete enumeration of His miracles. It is as if He would say : « Behold the works which I have accomplished ; are they not sufficient proofs? »

As to the vision of Christ, we find its elements in Jewish tradition. All this staging, they say, has been invented by the Christian faith to explain how Jesus had, on the occasion of his baptism, received the definitive revelation of his messianic rôle.

But, truly, if the Apostles and their contemporaires had visions, why could not Christ have had them? It matters little that the elements of this vision are found in the beliefs of that epoch. There is nothing that might have prevented

1. Mt. xi, 1-15; Lk., vii, 18-35.
2. A. Loisy, *Les Evangiles synoptiques*, I, p. 660.

Jesus from seeing the heavens open and the Holy Ghost descending on Him in the form of a dove, whilst a voice from heaven declares Him the Messias[1]. If the inaugural visions of the prophets are given credence, why should not this also? Besides, if tradition had invented the imagery of the descent of the Holy Ghost, it would have made a choice of fire rather than of a dove. For it is under the form of fire that the Holy Ghost manifested Himself to the Apostles; it is the baptism of « the Holy Ghostand fire » that the Baptist announced. If the Gospels record the symbol of the dove, it is undoubtedly because the objective reality of the fact demanded it. It appears, then, that the vision of Jesus is as historical as the rest of the narrative.

These answers sufficiently authorize us to maintain as an historical truth the deep meaning of the baptism of Jesus. Attracted by the preaching of John the Baptist, and seeing the time was at hand to come forth and begin His preaching, the Lord came to receive baptism from the hands of His Precursor. He wished to show that without penance no one would be admitted to the kingdom. He wished to be the first to receive the sign that would distinguish the children of the kingdom, the first to receive the seal of the new Covenant. Jesus had not yet come out of the water when the Spirit descended upon Him under the form of a dove, not to take possession of a soul which already belonged to Him entirely, but to show to men what would be the effect of the grace of Christian baptism and to sanctify the water which would be used to confer it. At the same time, the Father confirmed His messianic call made from all eternity.

---

1. The heavens opening, they say, is certainly not an objective fact. This feature, evidently borrowed from the Jewish cosmogony, suffices to show the artificial and fictitious character of these accounts of the baptism of Jesus. Let us remark that this passage of the Gospels is no more a cosmogonic statement than many other phrases of the Holy Books. Jesus speaks conformably to sensible appearances and most likely at the moment when Christ had His vision, the heavens appeared to open.

« Thou art my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased. »

Conclusion. — Whilst the baptism of the proselytes conferred a kind of legal purity, that of John the Baptist regenerated the heart, purifying it in view of the messianic kingdom. Thus the baptism of John differed esssentially from the baptism of the proselytes. Still, it was only an imperfect baptism; for it neither remitted sins nor gave the Holy Ghost. It was a rite which prepared one to enter into the kingdom of God. It was temporary, and was to disappear at the institution and promulgation of the baptism which, by remitting sins and giving the Holy Ghost, would thereby give entrance to the kingdom, that is to say, the Church. That baptism Christ instituted when He Himself received the baptism of John. At the same time He raised the baptism of John to the dignity of Christian baptism. John conferred the baptism of water. And lo! the presence of Jesus called down the Holy Ghost, under the form of a dove to show the effect of the grace of the new baptism and to sanctify the water destined to confer it. It was the first baptism of the New Law because it was the first baptism of water and of the Spirit. Still, Christian baptism was not made obligatory until after the resurrection of Christ. It is, then, the promulgation of that law which we read in the last verse of the Gospels of St. Matthew and St. Mark. Thus can we justify the canons of the Council of Trent which define the institution of baptism :

1. Baptism has been instituted by Jesus in the same manner as the other sacrements[1].

2. The baptism of the Lord Jesus has a different efficacy than the baptism of John the Baptist[2].

3. Natural water belongs to the essence of the baptismal rite[3].

---

1. Denz., 844.

2. *Ibid.*, 857 : *Si quis dixerit baptismum Joannis habuisse eamdem vim cum baptismo Christi, A. S.*

3. *Ibid.*, 858.

CHAPTER II.

THE CONSTITUTIVE ELEMENTS OF THE BAPTISMAL RITE.

The baptismal rite, according to the *Decree to the Armenians,* consists in a washing with water, accompanied by an invocation of the Holy Trinity. The washing with water, it specifies, is the *matter* of the sacrament. The Scholastics call the water the *remote matter* and the washing the *proximate matter*. The Decree adds that the invocation of the Holy Trinity, which must be made at the same time as the washing with water, is the *form* of the sacrament[1]. We shall study the origin and importance of those elements.

---

1. Denz., 696 : *Primum omnium sacramentorum locum tenet sanctum* Baptisma, *quod vitæ spiritualis janua est : per ipsum enim membra Christi ac de corpore efficimur Ecclesiæ. Et cum per primum hominem mors introierit in universos, « nisi ex aqua et Spiritu renascimur, non possumus in regnum cælorum introire ».* Cf. Joan., III, 5. *Materia hujus sacramenti est aqua vera et naturalis : nec refert, frigida sit an calida. Forma autem est : Ego te baptizo in nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti. Non tamen negamus, quin et per illa verba : Baptizatur talis servus Christi in nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti, vel : Baptizatur manibus meis talis in nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti, verum perficiatur baptisma ; quoniam cum principalis causa, ex qua baptismus virtutem habet, sit Sancta Trinitas, instrumentalis autem sit minister, qui tradit exterius sacramentum : si exprimitur actus, qui per ipsum exercetur ministrum, cum Sanctæ Trinitatis invocatione, perficitur sacramentum.*

ARTICLE I.

Baptismal water.

The errors of Protestants. — Among certain Protestant sects of the sixteenth century the custom was introduced of administering baptism without the act of washing with water. They merely imposed hands whilst pronouncing these words: « I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. » Such a practice was quickly taken to task by Luther, who maintained that the washing with water was absolutely necessary. This declaration did not prevent him from admitting, some years later, that what was of strict obligation was merely the washing. The matter used in the washing was not important; milk, wine, or beer could be used as well as water.

Calvin claimed that the washing with water was indispensable. But he held that, in the answer of Jesus to Nicodemus, « Unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost... », the word « water » was used metaphorically, to designate the Holy Ghost.

The definition of the Council of Trent.— The doctrine of both Luther and Calvin has been condemned by the Council of Trent, which anathematizes those who claim that true and natural water is not necessary for baptism, and that, therefore, these words of Christ : *Unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost,* must be taken metaphorically[1].

---

1. Denz., 858 : *Si quis dixerit aquam veram et naturalem non esse de necessitate baptismi, atque ideo verba illa Domini nostri Jesu Christi : « Nisi quis renatus fuerit ex aqua et Spiritu Sancto », ad metaphoram aliquam detorserit, A. S.*

Prescriptions of the Church. — The following prescription sare added by the Church to the dogmatic decree :

1) Except in case of necessity, baptism must be administered *sub gravi* with baptismal water. This water is that which is blessed twice a year, on Holy Saturday and the Vigil of Pentecost, by special prayers and with which is mixed the oil of catechumens and holy chrism.

2) When the priest administers private baptism at a house, he should, if there be time, bring baptismal water.

3) If the baptismal water kept in the fonts evaporate, it is permitted to add ordinary water, but less in quantity than the remaining baptismal water.

4) If the baptismal water has completely evaporated, or has become corrupt, other water should be blessed, without waiting for Holy Saturday or the Vigil of Pentecost. A special formula may be found in the Roman Ritual at the end of the Chapter « *Ordo Baptismi* ».

5) It is permitted to add a little warm water to the baptismal water, provided the warm water be less in quantity than the baptismal water.

History of the baptismal water. — In reading the *Acts* it is clear that the Apostles never had the idea of that purely spiritual baptism of which certain Protestants speak. The rite of baptism includes, it is true, the imposition of hands or some other equivalent ceremony, used in view of the bestowal of the Holy Ghost. But that rite is the normal adjunct of baptism and not the essential rite.

Those who had received the Holy Ghost, but had not received the baptism of water were not considered baptized. We read that Peter, while staying with the centurion Cornelius at Caesarea, addressed all those who were present. The Holy Ghost descended upon the whole audience. However, they were not considered baptized. The *Acts* add that St. Peter, witnessing this astonishing event, cried out : « Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, who

have received the Holy Ghost as well as we [1]? » In this discourse, Peter makes it perfectly plain that the essential rite of baptism is the washing with water.

On the contrary, those to whom baptism of water had been given, were considered as baptized, even before they had received the Holy Ghost. The deacon Philip is reported, in the *Acts,* as going into the the city of Samaria and baptizing all those who received the word of God. But he never gave them the Holy Ghost, for the power to do this was reserved to the Apostles. The *Acts* then state that Peter and John, having learnt what had happened, went into Samaria and imposed hands on those who had been baptized in order to confer the Holy Ghost upon them [2]. The deacon Philip was afterwards guided by the Spirit of God on the road to Gaza. He there met the eunuch of the queen of Ethiopia. He baptized him as he had baptized the Samaritans — that is to say — without conferring on him the Holy Ghost [3]. — These facts prove that, in the mind of the Apostles, baptism consisted essentially in the washing with water.

It is prescribed, in the *Didache*, to baptize in running water, and, by that expression must be understood streams or rivers. If this running water is not to be had, any other may be used, the water of a lake, or a cistern, hot or cold. If the quantity be scarce, one may pour water three times on the head of the person to be baptized [4]. But washing with water, in one form or another, is the necessary rite of baptism.

At an early period, the Gnostics rejected the use of water, as well as of any material element, pretending that matter was an essentially bad principle and that to use it would be to defile rather than to purify. At other times,

---

1. *Acts*, x, 34-48.
2. *Acts*, viii, 9-17.
3. *Acts*, viii, 26-40.
4. *Didache*, vii.

forgetting their principles, they invented a baptism in which they used magical formulas and replaced water by another material element. They were opposed by St. Irenaeus [1] and later by Tertullian. « Happy is our sacrament of water », says the latter, at the beginning of his *De Baptismo*..... « As little fishes, after the example of our Ἰχθύς, Jesus Christ, we are born in water, and in this water must we always remain, if we would be saved [2] ».

From this time on, great importance was attached to the consecration of the water used at baptism. The rite was cherished in the light of a purification and an exorcism, as well as a prayer the purpose of which was to call down upon the water the grace of the Holy Ghost [3]. In the sixth century the

---

1. *Haer.*, l. I, XXI, 4.

2. *De Baptismo*, I. This doctrine of Tertullian has been an inspiration for decorators in the Catacombs, where small fishes are often seen pointing toward a symbolic anchor, or towards the Eucharistic bread. Cf. J. P. Kirsch, art. *Ancre*, in *Dict. d'Arch. chrét. et de Lit.*, vol. I., pp. 1999-2031.

3. In the West, the consecration of water was in the first place a purification and an exorcism. Cf. Tertullian, *De Baptismo*, IV. Cyprian, *Epist.* LXX, I (Edition Hartel). On the contrary, in the East, the consecration had for its principal end the sanctification of the water. This can be best understood by that prayer from Serapion's *Prayer Book*, which in Funk's *edition*, follows the prayers for the Sunday synaxis : « Lord, King of all things, and author of all that exists, thou who, by the descent among us of thine only Son, Jesus Christ, hast graciously offered salvation to every creature; thou who hast redeemed thy work by the advent of thy infallible Word, gaze favorably from on high upon these waters; fill them with the Holy Ghost. May thy ineffable Word come upon these waters to infuse power therein, to render them fruitful and to fill them with thy grace so that the mystery we accomplish may not be in vain for those who wish to be reborn, but may fill them with divine grace. O Friend and Benefactor of men, spare thy work; save that which thy hand hath made. Impress on those who wish to be regenerated thy divine and mysterious likeness in order that through that likeness and by their regeneration, they may be saved and be made worthy of thy kingdom. And as thy only Son descended into the waters of the Jordan and sanctified them, so may He come now upon these waters and make them holy and spiritual in order that those baptized therein may no longer follow flesh and blood, but may become wholly spiritual and capable of serving thee — thou the eternal Father through Jesus Christ with the Holy Ghost. To thee be glory and power now and forever. Amen. » Cf. Funk, *Didascal. et constitut.*, II pp. 181-183. Serapion's *Prayer Book* has been preserved in a Greek manuscript of

custom of mixing with the baptismal water holy oil was joined to the blessing of the water. St. Gregory of Tours speaks of this practice [1].

It seems useless to drag out this research. The history of the baptismal water during the first centuries clearly emphasizes the fact that from the very times of the Apostles, Christian tradition has regarded the use of water as an essential element in the baptismal rite.

The Scholastics carefully undertook to give reasons justifying the use of water in the sacrament of our regeneration. It was fitting, they said, that water which served to wash away dirt from the body and clothes should also serve to wash away the defilements of the soul. By virtue of its cooling properties, water was also aptly used in baptism to calm the fires of concupiscence. Just, do they also say, as water impregnates the earth and is the indispensable condition for all vegetation, so baptismal water impregnates the regenerated soul, plants therein the germ of the soul's virtues and becomes the source of all supernatural growth [2].

ARTICLE II.

The baptismal ablution.

Prescriptions of the Church. — Water, then, is required in administering the sacrament of baptism. But something more is necessary, namely, the washing with water. *Aqua non est sacramentum nisi in quantum est abluens.*

Hence the Church has laid down conditions both for the

---

the eleventh century, found on Mt. Athos. It is a collection of prayers which date from the middle of the fourth century. They are attributed to Serapion, Bishop of Thmuis in Egypt, — the contemporary and the friend of St. Athanasius. Cf. Bishop Serapion's *Prayer Book*, S. P. C. K., 1899.

1. *Miracul.*, l. I, *De gloria martyrum*, XXIV; *P. L.*, LXXI, 725.

2. St. Thom. Aq., *Sum. theol.* III, q. lxvi, a. 3.

validity and *lawfulness*, which conditions it were well to recall.

The conditions for *validity* :

1. Baptismal washing can be done by immersion, total or partial, or by infusion.

2. Immediate contact of the water and the skin of the one to be baptized must be effected.

3. There must be a real washing with water. To effect this, the water should flow on the skin of the one who is being baptized. The Holy Office, by a decision of December 14, 1898, has orderedthat that baptism be repeated conditionally which was adm inistered with the thumb dipped in baptismal water.

4. The washing should be performed on the head. In baptism by partial immersion, the water should be poured on the head of the person baptized. In case of necessity, the washing may be done on one of the principal members of the body, but if washing on the head should later become practicable, the baptism should be repeated conditionally, according to the regulations of the Roman Ritual.

5. The pouring of the water must be performed by the one who pronounces the words, and at the moment these are pronounced. In the case of baptism by total immersion, he who is immersed should be held by the minister who pronounces the words. Otherwise, the form « I baptize thee » would not be verified.

The conditions for *lawfulness :*

1. The dissenting Greeks make triple immersion a condition for the validity of the sacrament. That claim is rejected by the Catholic Church who considers the three immersions or infusions solely as a condition of lawfulness.

2. There must be conformity with the rite of the Church to which one belongs. Baptism by infusion is the only licit rite in the West[1].

---

1. Only in the case of solemn baptism, are the three infusions required.

3. Each of the three infusions should be made in the form of a cross on the upper part of the head, or, on the forehead, if the hair prevents contact of the water with the skin.

History of baptismal ablution. — In the beginning, the candidate for baptism was immersed in water. Was this immersion total or partial? It was total in the East, and remained so up to the schism. Afterwards, the custom of total immersion was retained only among the dissentient Greeks[1].

According to the *Shepherd* of Hermas[2], the total immersion had been retained also in the West. Gradually, however, only partial immersion was exacted. The one who wished to be baptized entered the water of the pool up to his waist. The minister, taking water from the pool, poured it three times on the head of the person there standing and pronounced the form : « I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost[3]. »

When there was not sufficient water, the baptismal washing was performed by infusion as is indicated in the *Didache*[4]. Baptism by infusion was also administered to infants in danger of death. Novatian, the author of the schism to which he gave his name, had been baptized in bed, when he was in danger of death[5]. Baptism of this kind was also administered to people prevented by illness from going to the baptistery on the days of the solemn baptism, namely, on the vigils of Easter and Pentecost. This baptism was soon called βαπτισμὸς κλινικός : clinical baptism, or the baptism given in

---

As for cases of necessity wherein the Church ceremonies are omitted, one infusion is sufficient.

1. Cf. V. Ermoni, *Baptême chez les Coptes et les Syriens*, art. *Baptême* in *Dict. de Théol. cath.* vol. II, p. 241-250.

2. Simil. IX, XVI, 4.

3. L. Duchesne, *Origines du culte chrétien*, pp. 312-313.

4. *Didach.* VII.

5. Euseb., *Hist. eccl.*, I. VI, c. XLIII.

bed. However, even when this baptism was considered valid, it was, in the beginning, at least, little valued. According to a Council of Neo-Caesarea (314), they who had received the clinical baptism were regarded irregular, namely, incapable of receiving ordination[1]. Some doubted even its validity. Magnus, a bishop of Africa, wrote to St. Cyprian, on the subject of clinical baptism : It is valid, answered St. Cyprian, since the washing of the soul is not as the washing of the body. For the latter, much water is necessary, whereas, to cleanse the soul in the sacrament of baptism a little water suffices[2]. »

The custom of baptism by infusion was, for long ages, the exception in the Church. St. Thomas affirms that even in his time the custom of baptism by partial immersion, with the accompanying infusion on the head, was the more common[3]. Gradually that practice disappeared and the rite of simple infusion became general in the West. The cause of that change appears to have been the custom, introduced in the thirteenth century, of baptizing infants at their birth and of no longer waiting for the great Christian feasts of Easter and Pentecost. A potent factor in the introduction of this custom was the fear of endangering the health of the infants by plunging them into cold water[4]. The washing by

---

1. Can. 12. — Cf. Hefele, *Hist. of the Church Councils*, vol. I, p. 229.
2. Epist. LXIX, 12, (ed. Hartel).
3. *Sum. theol.* III, q. LXVI, a. 7.
4. J. Corblet, *Histoire du sacrement de Baptême*, t. I, pp. 240-241. « The principal reason why baptism by partial immersion was given up appears to have been the fear of impairing the health of newly-born infants by their immersion in cold water. There was little danger from this source when baptism was administered on the vigils of Easter and Pentecost, for then the weather is mild and warm. Under such a liturgical ruling, the majority of infants presented for baptism were some months, or, at least, some weeks old and could more easily endure the hardship of the cold bath. It was by no means the same when there was a question of baptizing infants a few days old, and in all seasons of the year. In this latter case, the same indulgence must be accorded which had been granted to the sick from the very first centuries. It is true the water could

simple infusion is the only mode of baptism now in use in the Western Church.

In the sixteenth century, Ladislaus Jagellon, king of Poland, inaugurated baptism by aspersion. This rite consisted in throwing water upon a group of individuals from a distance, either with the hand, or a branch of a tree, or the holy water brush. The danger consisted in the possibility that by such procedure many might receive only a drop of water. St. Francis Xavier we are told, thus baptized thousands of Japanese. When the pest broke out in Amiens, in 1668, Bishop François Faure ordered his priests to baptize by aspersion those infants who became victims of the terrible plague. He advised them to throw the water with a brush upon the head of each infant, whilst pronouncing the sacramental words; but, he added, strictest care should be taken to see if the water touches or not[1]. The danger of this mode of baptizing is that the water might not flow on the heads of those to be baptized. Moreover, the Roman Ritual which mentions three kinds of baptisms, namely, immersion, infusion and aspersion, orders the retention only of the first or second, according to the custom of the Churches[2].

---

have been heated, but would not the heating of such a quantity of liquid entail considerable trouble? It might have been necessary, as in the East, to have a special blessing for the heated water: to add thereto a little of the water from the fonts; to immerse the infant in a vase more or less profane, and thus to violate several points of the liturgical prescriptions. »

1. J. Corblet (Cf. *op. cit.*, pp. 263-266) shows that aspersion, such as described, was in use only at a relatively recent date. If sometimes Christian tradition had used the word *aspersion* to designate the baptismal washing, he says, it was to signify a rite more or less analogous to *infusion*. « Instead of pouring the water on the head of the person to be baptized, the celebrant, throws it some distance, in sufficient quantity, using for this purpose the hand or a branch of a tree. Such was the custom employed in the baptizing of lepers and those afflicted with the plague. » Even to-day the French Protestants give the name baptism of *aspersion* to the rite which Catholics call the baptism of *infusion*. Cf. A. Duchemin et L. Monod, *Le baptême et la liberté chrétienne*, p. 5, Paris, 1875.

2. *De sacramento baptismi, De forma* : *Baptismus licet fieri possit aut*

Following in the footsteps of the Fathers, the Scholastics developed the symbolism of the baptismal washing. For them, baptism represents the burying and, at the same time, the resurrection of the Christian with Christ, according to the words of St. Paul, « *Consepulti enim sumus cum illo per baptismum in mortem, ut quomodo Christus surrexit a mortuis per gloriam Patris, ita et nos in novitate vitæ ambulemus*[1] ». However, as St. Thomas remarks, if the rite of immersion best signifies this mystery, the other modes of washing typify it sufficiently well[2].

ARTICLE III.

The form of Baptism.

Prescriptions of the Church. — The invocation of the Most Blessed Trinity and the expression of the baptismal act must be considered as the two constitutive parts of the form of baptism. If one or the other of these two parts of the form be omitted, the baptism must be repeated conditionally. In addition, the Church has prescribed other details, which govern the application of this fundamental precept. Some are prescribed as essential, namely, those required for the validity of the sacrament; others, though not essential, must nevertheless be observed by the ministers of baptism. They are, so to speak, conditions of lawfulness.

In the following words is contained the form of baptism : « *Ego te baptizo in nomine Patris, et Filii, et Spiritus Sancti* », in English : « I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. »

---

per infusionem aquæ, aut per immersionem, aut per aspersionem, primus tamen, vel secundus modus, qui magis sunt in usu, pro Ecclesiarum consuetudine, retineantur.

1. *Rom.*, VI, 4.
2. *Sum. theol.*, III, Q.LXVI, A. 7.

1. The pronoun « *Ego* » is not essential in Latin because it is contained in the verb *baptizo*. « I », however, is essential in English.

2. The verb *baptizo* is essential, and it must be in the indicative so as to point to the act of the minister. The sacrament would not, however, be invalid if the verb were used in the third person, as is shown in the *Decree to the Armenians*[1]. Neither would baptism be invalid were this word replaced by a synonym, such as *abluo*.

3. The personal pronoun *te* is essential. It is as important indeed to mention the person who is being baptized as it is to mention the one who baptizes, otherwise, the baptismal act would be too indefinitely expressed.

4. The phrase *in nomine* is essential. The preposition *in* completes the sense in the Latin expression, and could not be suppressed without endangering the validity.

5. The clear and distinct invocation of the three persons of the Most Blessed Trinity is essential. It would not be sufficient to say, « I baptize thee in the name of God », or even « in the name of the Trinity ». It is a matter of doubt whether the validity would be impaired by saying, « I baptize thee in the name of the Father, of Christ and of the Holy Ghost. » Such a contingency would necessitate conditional re-baptism.

6. The preposition *et* after *Patris* is not essential. But if it be omitted both after *Patris* and *Filii*, the validity of the baptismal form becomes doubtful. In this case also, it would be necessary to re-baptize the person conditionally.

7. The form of conditional baptism varies according to the reasons of one's doubt. The celebrant may say, for instance : *Si non es baptizatus, si vivis, si tu es homo, si tu es capax, ego te baptizo*. The condition *si vis baptizari*, although it does not imperil the validity of the sacrament,

---

1. Denz., 696.

is nevertheless forbidden. For, as we shall see later on, it is not permitted to baptize an adult who does not want baptism, or who, in all probability, has no desire of the sacrament[1].

8. It is essential that the form *Ego te baptizo.....* be pronounced by the minister who baptizes, and, morally speaking, at least, at the same time that the water is being poured.

History of the form of baptism. — The baptismal form is made up of two parts : the invocation of the three persons of the Most Blessed Trinity, and the concrete expression of the baptismal act. Each part has its own history.

The first part of the baptismal form : The Invocation of the Trinity. — At the very beginning arises the question whether the Apostles, when baptizing, invoked the Trinity. Relying on the *Acts of the Apostles*, some liberal Protestants claim that the Apostles baptized in the « name of Jesus[2]. »

However, this affirmation rests on a wrong interpretation of the texts. It is asserted several times[3] indeed, that the Apostles administered baptism « in the name of Jesus »,

---

1. In conditional baptism, the celebrant must mention the condition audibly, so that the faithful who are present may understand that the baptism is now administered, only if the previous one be invalid. As the mention of the condition is always something more or less odious, it is only demanded when those sacraments are given which cannot be repeated. In the administration of the sacrament of penance, which may be repeated, confessors are only required to mention the condition privately.

2. A. Sabatier, *loc. cit.*, p. 104.

3. *Acts*, II, 38, VIII; 16; X, 48; XIX, 5. Besides the texts of the *Acts* which we have cited, and which can only be interpreted in our favor, A. Sabatier appeals to the texts of the Epistles of St. Paul (Cf. *Rom.*, VI, 3-5; I *Cor.*, I, 13; *Gal.*, III, 7), wherein the Apostle says « we have been baptized in Christ ». A. Sabatier should have seen that St. Paul, in using this expression, does not express at all the invocation wich accompanies the baptismal washing; he only wishes to mark the resemblance which baptism establishes between Christ and us, in making us die to sin.

but, as the context makes plain, it was only because they regarded the baptism of John as abrogated or insufficient. In reality, there is no question in the Acts of the form according to which the Apostles administered baptism. The expression « baptism in the name of Jesus » merely designates Christian baptism, so as to clearly distinguish it from the baptism of John.

If there is no authority for the statement that the Apostles baptized in the « name of Jesus, » must we admit that they baptized « in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, » that is, according to the traditional interpretation of the text, in *invoking* the three divine Persons? The Savior had sent forth His Apostles to baptize « in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost ». Did that order refer merely to the baptismal washing, or did it comprehend, at the same time, the baptismal washing and the invocation of the Trinity? It has sometimes been asserted that the command bore directly on the baptismal washing alone. Such an assertion is gratuitous; furthermore, it is apparently adverse to reality. It is clear from the testimony of the *Didache*[1] that even as far back as the close of the first century, baptism was administered according to the traditional form. All evidence seems to point to the fact that the usage thus followed was the practice of the Apostles themselves, and that the apostles merely obeyed the order wich they had received from Christ.

In the second century, baptism was likewise administered in the name of the three divine Persons. « Those who believe in the truth of our teaching and in our doctrine », writes St. Justin, « promise, in the first place, to live according to that doctrine. We then teach them to pray and to beg of God, by fasting, the remission of their sins,

1. *Didache*, VII. « Administer baptism in the following manner : after having imparted all the previous instruction, baptize in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, in running water. »

and we ourselves pray and fast together with them. Finally we lead them to a place where there is water, and there, in the same manner in which we ourselves were regenerated, do we, in turn, regenerate them. In the name of God the Father, and the Master of all things, and of Jesus Christ, our Savior, and of the Holy Ghost, they are baptized in water[1]. » The same conclusion is reaped from the testimony of St. Irenaeus : « We are purified in baptism, » he writes, « by water and the ἐπίκλησις[2] ». The ἐπίκλησις of which he speaks is the invocation of the three divine Persons.

The third century tells the same story. The manner of administering baptism is unchanged. « The risen Lord », writes St. Cyprian, « taught his Apostles the way they should baptize when He said to them : All power has been given to me, go, teach ye all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost[3]. » Firmilian of Caesarea concurs that « he who has been baptized has been able to obtain grace by the invocation of the divine Persons[4] ».

In the fourth century, the necessity of the invocation of the Trinity in the administration of baptism becomes trumpet-tongued. The Council of Arles (314) demands that all converted heretics be rebaptized, if it be proved that, in their sects, they have not been baptized with the Trinitarian form[5].

St. Ambrose, at first, seems to admit in his work *De Spiritu Sancto*, that, strictly speaking, baptism in the name of Jesus, or even in the name of one of the three divine Per-

---

1. I *Apol.*, LXI.
2. Fragm. XXXV ., *P. G.*, VII, 1248.
3. Epist. LXXIII, 5 (ed. HARTEL).
4. *Inter epist. S. Cypriani*, epist. LXXV, 9 (ed. HARTEL). *Qui baptizatus est, gratiam consequi potuit, invocata Trinitate nominum Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti.*
5. DENZ., 53.

sons[1] would be valid. The text is very obscure and may be just as well understood not in the sense of the baptismal form which the minister must pronounce, but in the sense of the faith in the three divine persons, which the adult must profess in order that his baptism be complete, i. e., fully efficacious. The second meaning seems to be demanded, not only by an attentive consideration of the passage in question, but also by the contention which St. Ambrose intends to prove. The

---

1. De Spiritu Sancto, *l. I, III : Sicut qui benedicitur in Christo, benedicitur in nomine Patris, et Filii et Spiritus Sancti, quia unum nomen, potestas una, ita etiam ubi operatio aliqua divina aut Patris, aut Filii, aut Spiritus designatur, non solum ad Sanctum Spiritum, sed etiam ad Patrem refertur et Filium, nec solum ad Patrem, sed etiam ad Filium refertur et Spiritum.*

The Samaritans (Act., VIII, 27) who did not recognize the Holy Spirit, could not either believe in Jesus Christ, and had consequently received only the baptism of John. John announced Jesus Christ and the Spirit (JN., I, 26-27). Jesus Christ preached in the Holy Spirit.

Ergo isti (Samaritani) quia nec in Christi nomine, nec cum fide Spiritus Sancti baptizati fuerant, non potuerunt accipere baptismatis sacramentum.

Baptizati sunt itaque in nomine Jesu Christi : nec iteratum est in his baptisma, sed novatum; unum enim baptisma (Ephes., IV, 5). *Ubi autem non est plenum baptismatis sacramentum, nec principium, vel species aliqua baptismatis aestimatur. Plenum autem est, si Patrem et Filium Spiritumque Sanctum fatearis. Si unum neges, totum subrues. Et quemadmodum si unum in sermone comprehendas, aut Patrem, aut Filium, aut Spiritum Sanctum; fide autem nec Patrem, nec Filium, nec Spiritum Sanctum abneges, plenum est fidei sacramentum : ita etiam quamvis et Patrem, et Filium, et Spiritum dicas, et aut Patris, aut Filii, aut Spiritus Sancti minuas potestatem, vacuum est omne mysterium. Denique et illi ipsi qui dixerant : Nec si Spiritus Sanctus sit audivimus, baptizati sunt postea in nomine Domini Jesu Christi* (Acts, XIX, 5).

Cum enim dicitur : In nomine Domini Jesu Christi, per unitatem nominis impletum mysterium est : nec a Christi baptismate Spiritus separatur; quia Joannes in paenitentia baptizavit, Christus in Spiritu.

And reciprocally, to say Jesus is to say also the Father and the Holy Ghost (*Acts*, X, 38), *quia qui unum dixerit, Trinitatem signavit* [likewise, the baptism of the Holy Ghost is equal to the baptism of Jesus].

Unde et rationi copuletur auctoritas, in Spiritu quoque recte nos baptizari posse Scriptura indicat, dicente Domino : Vos autem baptizabimini in Spiritu Sancto (Acts, I, 5). *Et alibi Apostolus ait : Omnes enim in uno corpore, in unum Spiritum baptizati sumus* (I Cor., XII, 13).

latter desires to prove that the three divine persons are so inseparable that simple faith in one implies faith in the other two. The baptism of the Lord Jesus, which is recounted throughout the *Acts*, is proof of his assertion. Those who received this baptism in the name of the Lord Jesus, viz. Believing in the Lord Jesus, received baptism in all its fullness and efficacy. Because, when, with single faith they believed in the Lord Jesus, they believed likewise in the Father and the Holy Ghost. We think that the letter of Pope Nicholas I to the Bulgarians should be interpreted in this same sense. Moreover, Nicholas I. himself refers to the text of St. Ambrose and quotes him as authority [1].

The theologians of the middle ages, even up to the thirteenth century, interpreted the text of St. Ambrose and the decision of Pope Nicholas I. as supporting the validity of baptism administered in the name of Jesus. Hence, they taught commonly that baptism of this kind might have been given by the Apostles and continued in later ages. St. Thomas accepted this teaching of his contemporaries with this qualification that, if the Apostles baptized in the name of Jesus, it was because of a revelation and a dispensation, the purpose of which was to give to the name and person of Jesus a more prominent position. [2]

A reaction against this theological teaching set in at the beginning of the middle of the sixteenth century. Melchior Cano [3] and after him, Bellarmine [4] and Suarez [5] showed that the texts of the *Acts*, from which some concluded that the Apostles baptized in the name of Jesus alone, were meant only to distinguish Christian baptism from the baptism of John. Modern exegesis, we have seen, has fully justified this inter-

---

1. Denz., 334-335.
2. *Sum. theol.*, III, q. LXVI, a. 6, ad 1[um].
3. *De locis theol.*, l. VI, VIII, ad 7[um].
4. *Controv.*, *De Baptismo*, III.
5. *De Baptismo*, *disp.* XXI, *sect.* III.

pretation. On the other hand, the text of St. Ambrose, when taken with its context, does not appear to have the meaning which has sometimes been given it. Hence we may conclude with certainty that Christian Tradition has ever recognized the invocation of the Trinity as the necessary baptismal form. If other forms were used in various heretical sects, these never received the authorization or approbation of the Church.

The second part of the baptismal form : the expression of the act of Baptism. — From the precept of Christ enjoining the invocation of the Trinity in the administration of baptism, there arose, at an early period, the practice of a threefold baptismal ablution, viz. the total immersion was repeated three times or, in case of partial immersion, the water was poured on the head three times. The first immersion or infusion corresponded to the invocation of the Father; the second, to the invocation of the Son; the third, to the invocation of the Holy Ghost[1].

But was the baptismal act expressed by the baptismal form, or was it sufficiently expressed by the fact that it was accomplished?

A considerable number of liturgical texts which treat of the ceremonies of baptism do not mention the expression of the baptismal act. According to them, the administration of baptism consists in a series of questions and answers, and in the ablutions (by total immersion or by affusion). The minister

---

1. The triple washing which corresponded to the invocation of the Trinity became also a profession of faith in the three divine persons. Hence it is not astonishing that this discipline should be influenced by the Trinitarian controversies. In the East, the Sabellians introduced the practice of one ablution, in order to show more clearly the real identity of the three divine persons. In the sixth century, in Spain, the triple ablution was regarded as a profession of the Arian faith. The Fourth Council of Toledo prescribed the adoption of one ablution only. Cf. Dom Chardon, *Histoire du Baptême*, ch. III. G. Bareille, art. *Baptême d'après les Pères*, IV. *Mode de collation*, in *Dict. de Théol. cath.*, vol. II, pp. 185-186.

of baptism asks the catechumen, if he believes in the Father. When the catechumen answers in the affirmative, the first ablution is made. The minister then asks whether the catechumen believes in the Son. A like response in the affirmative is followed by the second ablution. Finally the catechumen is questioned on his belief in the Holy Ghost, and upon an affirmative reply the third ablution is performed[1].

On the other hand, many facts show that the interrogations about the faith and the responses had such an importance in the third and fourth centuries that when an investigation was made on the value of a baptism, the main point they tried to ascertain was what interrogations and replies had been made [2].

On the strength of these documents, liturgists have asked themselves whether baptism did not consist solely in this triple series of questions and answers, with ablutions, and

---

1. In *De sacramentis*, l. II, VII (Cf. *P. L.*, 429), written by an anonymous author of the end of the fourth century, though for a long time attributed to St. Ambrose, the following description of the baptismal rite may be found :

[In baptismo] interrogatus es : Credis in Deum, Patrem omnipotentem ? Dixisti, Credo, et mersisti, hoc est sepultus es.

Iterum interrogatus es : Credis in Dominum nostrum Jesum Christum ?... Dixisti, Credo, et mersisti.

Tertio interrogatus es : Credis et in Spiritum sanctum ? Dixisti, Credo tertio mersisti.

2. Firmilian, bishop of Caesarea, in Cappadocia, writes to St. Cyprian (Cf. *Int. ep. S. Cypr., epist.* LXXV, 10) about a scandal : — a woman who called herself a prophetess, had dared to celebrate the mysteries of baptism and the Eucharist. In baptizing, she used the customary interrogations so that the baptism seemed to be valid.

In a letter to Xystus II, St. Denis of Alexandria submits the case of one whom he had long considered as a baptized person. This man had been recently present at a baptism, and had been troubled by the interrogations and responses, which he had heard. Deeply moved and in tears, he came to Denis, his bishop, and told him that he had received from heretics a non-Catholic baptism, full of impieties and blasphemies. Cited by EUSEB., *H. E.*, l. VII, IX.

Rufinus (Cf. *H. E.*, l. I, XIV) tells of a childhood prank of the future bishop of Alexandria, St. Athanasius : while playing, he baptized several little pagans. In the process of inquiry, only the interrogations and replies were considered.

whether, consequently, the questions and answers were not used formerly as the baptismal form.

The problem is serious, for the necessity of both the mention of the baptismal act in the form of baptism, as well as the Trinitarian invocation would thus be questioned. The problem then comes to this, whether the baptismal form in use to-day was employed in the early ages.

To solve this difficulty a more objective examination of the documents must be made. The liturgical texts which omit our baptismal form intend solely, it seems, to relate the examination of the catechumens. It is, then, in no way surprising that mention is not made of the sacramental words. Besides, the importance attached to the interrogation and replies of the catechumens will not surprise any one who remembers the impassioned doctrinal controversies of that era. On the other hand, the texts which we have quoted in the history of the Trinitarian invocation show that from the very beginning the baptismal ablution was accompanied by the express invocation of the three divine persons. If, then, some Sacramentaries do not mention our baptismal form, others of more recent date, indeed, record it most explicitly. The *Canons of Hippolytus* prescribe the recitation of the entire form, *Baptizo te in nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti,* at each of the three ablutions. The same prescription is found in some ancient copies of the Armenian Ritual. The Coptic Ritual preserves a combination which also dates from ancient times. The Trinitarian form is distributed between the three immersions, as follows : *In prima mersione : Ego te baptizo in nomine Patris, Amen; in secunda* : *Ego te baptizo in nomine Filii, Amen ; in tertia, Ego te baptizo in nomine Spiritus Sancti, Amen*[1]. Every-

1. Cf. P. DE PUNIET, art. *Baptême,* in *Dict. d'arch. chrét. et de Lit.,* vol. II, pp. 340-343. According to Mgr. Duchesne, the Canons of Hippolytus are of the third century, contemporary with the author to whom they are attributed. Cf. *Histoire ancienne de l'Eglise,* t. I, p. 534. In his important work, *Die*

thing tends to make us believe that where interrogations with responses alternate with the ablution, the minister, while performing the ablution pronounced, at the same time, either a complete form as that of the Canons of Hippolytus, or a distributed form, such as is found in the Coptic Ritual.

In conclusion, those who claim that the mention of the baptismal act and of the Trinitarian invocation are sufficiently expressed by the triple ablution alternating with the triple questions and answers of the catechumen, could hardly escape various condemnations by the Popes. In the Middle Ages, some unenlightened people had baptized infants when in danger of death, with these simple words : *In nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti*. Such a form was condemned as invalid by Alexander III. (1181). Despite this condemnation, in the seventeenth century, Père Morin insisted upon the validity of such a baptism. The same opinion was endorsed by Francis Farvacques, a doctor of the University of Louvain, who went so far as to teach in public that « those could not be branded as heretics who averred that baptism, at the time of St. Augustine, could be validly administered with the form « In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost », without the words, « I baptize thee ». This proposition was condemned by Alexander VIII. (1690)[1].

Apostolischen Konstitutionem (Rottenburg, 1891), Funk refers them, more correctly, it seems, to the fifth century, and considers them to be derived from the eighth book of the *Apostolical Constitutions*.

1. Denz., 1317.

CHAPTER III.

THE EFFECTS OF BAPTISM.

In the very beginning, as we have said, baptism is looked upon as the necessary rite of Christian initiation, the rite by which man is made a Christian and a member of the Church. It remains to be asked in what the nature of this effect consists.

The Protestants of the sixteenth century claimed that the effect of baptism is indeed spiritual, but only extrinsic. The soul is still burdened with its sins and weakness. Before baptism, God gazed upon it and beheld it just as it really was. Now, he looks at it in the wondrous light of the merits of His Son, in which, as a consequence, that soul is clothed. Yet baptism has played no direct part in changing God's dispositions to the soul: faith alone did it; the faith of the person in God's mercy, manifested in Jesus Christ and which baptism can but quicken into activity.

Orthodox Protestants to-day still teach this same doctrine. On the other hand, liberal Protestants affirm that from the beginning of Christianity the effect of baptism has been merely juridical, viz., the incorporation, or registration of a member of the Church, who was then naturalized Christian.

Against these theories, we must first show that baptism produces in the soul a real change, a veritable regeneration,

and then that this effect is one due directly to the baptismal rite.

ARTICLE I.

The regeneration of the soul by Baptism.

The Doctrine of the Church. — The effect of baptism is the remission of all sins. It effaces original sin, in which men are born, because of their descent from sinful Adam. Moreover, in the case of an adult, baptism washes away all actual sins committed previous to the reception of the sacrament. This doctrine is given in the *Decree to the Armenians*[1], as the doctrine of the Church, and has been defined by the Council of Trent in the *Decree on Justification*[2]. The *Decree to the Armenians* states, in addition, that baptism remits not only sin properly so called, but all the pains due to sin, in other words, both the eternal and temporal punishments; consequently, all the obstacles to immediate entrance into heaven are removed[3]. However, the sacrament does not take away concupiscence and suffering which are the consequences of original sin[4]. Since the remission of sins is effected always by the incoming of grace into the soul, baptism must produce grace. First, it bestows habitual, sanctifying, or justifying grace, by which our soul is raised from the state of sin to the state of justice; from a state of enmity towards God to a state of friendship. The distinctive mark of the grace of baptism is best expressed when we speak of it as being the grace of our first justification, the grace of regeneration to the supernatural life, the grace whereby the

1. Denz., 696.
2. *Ibid.*, 799.
3. *Ibid.*, 696.
4. *Ibid.*, 791.

soul is *born* unto a life of union with Christ. At first elevating the very substance of our soul, it reaches out to all the faculties and the different functions of our intellectual and voluntary activity[1]. In this latter capacity it constitutes what are called the infused virtues, that is to say, those which have been bestowed upon us by the very fact that the grace of justification is given us.

Moreover, according to the common teaching, at the very moment when baptism produces the grace of justification, it gives likewise to the newly baptized the right to receive in due time, those actual graces which will help him to live according to the grace of his baptism. The reader may ask what effects the sacrament has upon the newly-born? In the first place, the infant is regenerated by virtue of the sacrament, and acquires, moreover, a right to the assistance of actual grace, at the moment when his reason awakes. Because of this help, he will be spurred on to seek that intellectual nourishment which animates, strengthens and develops the faith; he will be moved to take and use the means of salvation which are none other than the Church and the sacraments.

Along with justifying grace, baptism confers the gifts of the Holy Ghost, which indeed are inseparable from justification[2]. By such gifts we understand those habitual dispositions, distinct from the infused virtues, which enable the Christian to resist with greater fortitude and confidence difficulties involving special hardships.

Finally, baptism is one of the three sacraments which imprint on the soul an indelible character. This baptismal character constitutes an obstacle to the repetition of baptism, and renders possible the reception of the other sacraments.

---

1. St. Thomas, *Sum. theol.*, III, q. lxxii, a. 7, ad 3um : *Sacramenta ordinantur ad quosdam speciales effectus, in vita christiana, præter actus potentiarum animæ ut baptismus ad generandum hominem in Christo.*

2. Denz., 800.

The doctrine of the non-repetition of baptism, explicitly taught by the *Decree to the Armenians*, [1] has been defined by the Council of Trent [2].

Baptismal regeneration brings about, as a consequence, the incorporation of the subject with Jesus Christ and the Church. All those regenerated by baptism are, according to the language of St. Paul, one same mystical body of which Christ is the head. It is called the body of Christ, or the body of the Church, according as one considers more particularly the head, which is Christ, or the members of that body, namely the hierarchical society, the visible Church. No one can become a member of the body of the Church or of the body of Christ unless he has received baptism. Hence this rite is called the sacrament of incorporation with Christ or with the Church. This doctrine is taught in the *Decree to the Armenians*[3], and in the *Catechism* of the Council of Trent [4]. The life of Christ however extends its vivifying influence outside the body which it animates. This explains the fact that though one cannot belong to the body of Christ or of the Church unless through baptism, yet it is possible, before the reception of baptism, to belong to the soul of that body of Christ, or of the Church.

By his incorporation with Christ and the Church, the Christian is bound to accept the whole doctrine of Christ, taught by the Church, and to live according to the precepts of Christ and His Church. This complex obligation constitutes what we call the baptismal vows.

Such is the defined doctrine or common teaching of the Church on the regeneration of the soul by baptism. We shall first seek the foundations of this teaching in *Holy Scripture* and *Patristic Tradition*, and then we shall turn to the pages

---

1. Denz., 695.
2. *Ibid.*, 852, 867, 869.
3. *Ibid.*, 696.
4. *Cat. Trid.*, part II, ch. II, n. 48 and 52.

of the *Angelic Doctor* and see how well he has expounded and fathomed the teaching of our faith on the effects of baptism.

Holy Scripture. — From the various writings of the New Testament, baptism appears as the rite of spiritual regeneration.

To have a part in the kingdom of God, it is necessary to be born again of water and the Spirit; so declared Jesus to Nicodemus[1]. In other words, only a spiritual re-birth effected by the Holy Ghost can fit one to enter the kingdom of heaven, and this the Holy Ghost accomplishes in the baptism of water. St. Paul describes the baptismal regeneration with the most striking figures. Baptism is the new circumcision[2], that is, the rite by which we enter into the new covenant and by which we become members of the body of Christ[3]. By baptism we are plunged into the death of Christ[4], that is, our sins are expiated and our moral defilements are washed away. We are buried with Christ in the tomb, in order to rise with Him[5]; in other words, we die to sin, and at the same time, are reborn to the life of grace. We are grafted on Jesus Christ[6], that is, our nature is so wedded to the supernatural life that henceforth we should live only in accordance with that life. Again, we are clothed with Jesus Christ; the bond of solidarity which united us to sinful Adam, has been broken and we are united to Christ the Savior, so intimately that we become new creatures. All these metaphors clearly contain and show forth the efficacy of baptism, viz., to establish us in the life of grace. No wonder that the Apostle has, in

---

1. Jn., iii, 5.
2. *Col.*, ii, 9.
3. 1 *Cor.*, xii, 13.
4. *Rom.*, vi, 3-5.
5. *Ibid.*, vi, 5.
6. *Ibid.*, vi, 5.

another place, called this sacrament a supernatural « laver of regeneration » [1].

The Doctrine of the Fathers. — The doctrine of the effects of baptism assumes even greater precision in the teaching of the Fathers. At first, the Fathers dwelt upon the remission of sins, and as in those times the question of adult baptism was extremely important, special treatment was accorded to the remission of actual sins. « We enter the water laden with defilements and sins, says the *Epistle of Barnabas*, and we come out laden with blessings, our hearts filled with fear and our souls with hope in Jesus [2]. » Hermas speaks of a tower-like structure, built upon the water. Thus does he symbolize the Church, wherein none enters unless purified by the waters of baptism [3]. St. Justin likewise describes the mystery of our regeneration : « At our first generation we are born ignorant, and we come into the world imbued with bad habits and perverse inclinations. It is in order to rise from this pitiable state, and to obtain the remission of our past sins, that upon us, who wish to be regenerated and are repentant, the name of God the Father is invoked by means of water.... It is also in the name of Jesus Christ who was crucified under Pontius Pilate, and in the name of the Holy Ghost who revealed through the prophets the entire history of Jesus, that he who is enlightened is washed [4]. » No Father has been more explicit on this subject than Tertullian. « Blessed is our sacrament of water », he writes, at the beginning of *De Baptismo*. « By it we are cleansed from the sins of our former blindness, and are made free unto eternal life [5]. And further on, he adds : « Undoubtedly our crimes do not appear on our bodies, for the sinner does not bear upon his skin the

---

1. *Tit.*, III, 5.
2. *Barn.*, XI, 11.
3. *Shepherd*, Simil., IX, XVI, 6. Cf. A. D'ALÈS, *L'Édit de Calliste, Étude sur les origines de la pénitence chrétienne*, pp. 54-67.
4. I *Apol.*, LXI.
5. *De Baptismo*, I.

mark of idolatry, of adultery, of theft. It is the soul which is stained by the defilement of our crimes. The soul commands, the flesh obeys. The culpability, however, belongs to both : to the soul because it commands ; to the flesh, because it obeys. Consequently, in these waters, to which an angel has imparted some healing virtue, the soul is purified corporeally and the soul is washed spiritually [1].» Tertullian expresses the self same thought in *De resurrectione carnis*, where we find that oft-quoted phrase : « The flesh is washed that the soul may be cleansed [2]. »

Baptism remits sin by the communication of sanctifying grace. Since baptism causes us to be born to the supernatural life, the grace special to baptism is, as we shall see later, essentially a grace of regeneration. This doctrine, taught by St. Paul, in the passages already cited, is supported and developed by all the Fathers ; and in particular by St. Cyril of Jerusalem : « You were dead from your sins when you descended into the water, but when you returned you came out full of life, suffused through and through by the justice you had received. After having shared in the death of Jesus Christ, you shared likewise in His resurrection... The same Spirit (which descended on Jesus Christ at the moment when He received the baptism of John) will descend on you if you approach this sacrament with a sincere and true piety. The voice of the Father will be heard over again declaring, not, of course, as it did to Jesus Christ, « This is my Son, » but « Behold him who is made my child ». Jesus Christ alone can claim by nature the sonship of God ; (as for you) you are made His son only by adoption. Prepare, then, your soul to become the child and heir of God, the co-heir of Jesus Christ [3]. »

---

1. *De Baptismo*, IV.

2. *De resurrectione carnis*, VIII : *Caro abluitur ut anima emaculetur ; caro ungitur, ut anima consecretur ; caro signatur ut et anima muniatur ; caro manus impositione adumbratur ut et anima spiritu illuminetur ; caro corpore et sanguine Christi vescitur ut et anima Deo saginetur.*

3. *Catech.*, III, XII-XV.

In his *Procatechesis* St. Cyril asserts that baptism imprints upon the soul an indelible and holy seal, σφραγὶς ἁγία ἀκατάλυτος[1]. In his *Catechesis,* he compares the σφραγὶς of baptism to the brand placed upon sheep. « Receive », says he, « this mysterious seal, that ye may be recognized by Our Lord as belonging to Him. See that ye be reckoned among the holy and spiritual flock of Jesus Christ; in other words, that ye be among the sheep placed upon his right[2]. » A little further, he continues, « This σφραγὶς is the insignia of the sacred army, the mark used by Christ to set apart His soldiers. He who harbors internal hypocrisy is rejected by Christ as unworthy of His army; but those who are found worthy are filled with the baptismal grace. Christ casts not His holy treasures to the dogs. Rather, let Him behold an upright conscience and straightway He imprints the seal of salvation and honor, the seal which makes us the friend of the angels and the enemy of the demons[3]. » All these formulas will be used later on to express the baptismal character. St. Cyril intends here to indicate not the baptismal character, but the baptismal grace which, for the adult, depends indeed on his good dispositions. The holy Doctor teaches the doctrine of the baptismal character implicitly, yet really, when he declares that baptism validly conferred cannot be received a second time : « One cannot receive baptism two or three times; otherwise it could be said : « The first time I was mistaken, the second time I will correct myself. » If you made a mistake the first time, it is irremediable, for there is only one Lord, one faith, one baptism[4]. »

In the same way the doctrine of the baptismal character was taught in the third century, during the controversies on rebaptism. St. Cyprian thought that baptism admi-

---

1. *Procatech.*, XVI.
2. *Catech.*, I, II.
3. *Ibid.*, III.
4. *Procatech.*, VII.

nistered by heretics was neither fruitful nor valid; in other words, it was null and void. Hence, in his opinion, it was to be done over again. Pope St. Stephen forbade this practice. Undoubtedly, says Stephen, such a baptism may not be fruitful or useful, but it is valid, for baptism administered by an heretical minister always produces — even though the recipient be a heretic — an effect that is permanent and distinct from grace.

At a later date, St. Augustine rehearsed the teachings of his predecessors on the subject. In his controversy with the Donatists, he set forth the reason why baptism should not be repeated. In baptism, he says, the Holy Ghost produces an effect distinct from and independent of grace. That mark is indelible and the apostate bears it upon him when he enters the camp of the heretics, just as the deserter retains the military insignia. If he re-enter the Church, he must not, then, receive baptism anew. Likewise, he who receives baptism, badly disposed, does not fully prevent the efficacy of the sacrament. His sins are not remitted, nor is grace conferred on him, but he receives the character; if he be converted, he must not be baptized anew; upon the performance of penance that particular sacramental effect which was denied him will be granted to him[1].

The Doctrine of St. Thomas. — Baptism, St. Thomas teaches, remits original sin, and, in case of an adult, all actual sins commited before the reception of the sacrament[2]. Baptism, moreover, remits all the punishment due to sin, the eternal as well as the temporal; but there remain the

---

1. Epist. CLXXXV, 23 : *Neque enim si quisquam regio charactere a signato desertore signetur, et accipiat indulgentiam, atque ille redeat ad militiam, ille autem esse in militia, in qua nondum erat, incipiat.* Cf. Epist. XCVIII, 5. — *De Baptismo contra Donatistas*, l. I, 18. — Sermo VIII. *P. L.*, XLVI, 839.

2. *Sum. theol.*, III, q. LXIX, a. 1, 2.

consequences of original sin, such as concupiscence and suffering[1]. The Angelic Doctor carefully considers the case of an adult who would come to baptism with perfect contrition already in his heart, in other words, with a repentance sufficient by itself for the remission of his sins. St. Thomas asserts that in such a case, the neophyte would obtain the pardon of his sins before the reception of baptism, on condition, however, that he has at least the implicit desire to receive the sacrament. No one can be forgiven his sins unless he believe in the passion of Christ, and unless he purpose to participate by baptism in the fruits of the redemption. But what, then, will be the effect of the sacrament? None other than to remit the temporal punishment due to sin and to imprint the baptismal character[2].

This remission of sin is effected by the communication of grace and the infused virtues. Jesus Christ becomes our leader through the sacrament of baptism, says St. Thomas, and upon us His members should be poured forth the fulness of grace and virtues. It is of this that St. John has said : « We have all received of the plenitude of His life[3]. » Together with sanctifying grace and the infused virtues, baptism bestows upon us the gifts of the Holy Ghost which cannot be separated from them and are never wanting in justification. St. Thomas, it is true, only speaks of them when referring to the sacrament of confirmation. However, he does not intend to make them the exclusive property of that sacra-

---

1. *Sum., theol.* a. 3.

2. *Ibid.*, a. 1, ad 2um : *Ad secundum dicendum quod nullius peccati remissio fieri potest nisi per virtutem passionis Christi : unde et Apostolus dicit Hebr.*, IX, 22, « *quod sine sanguinis effusione non fit remissio* ». *Unde motus humanæ voluntatis, qui est in pœnitente, non sufficeret ad remissionem culpæ, nisi adesset fides passionis Christi, et propositum participandi ipsam, vel suscipiendo baptismum, vel subjiciendo se clavibus Ecclesiæ. Et ideo quando aliquis adultus pœnitens ad baptismum accedit, consequitur quidem remissionem omnium peccatorum ex proposito baptismi, perfectius autem ex reali susceptione baptismi.* » See also a. 4, ad 2um.

3. *Sum. theol.*, III, q. LXIX, a. 4.

ment; he only means that in confirmation these gifts are received with a newer abundance and fulness[1].

The Angelic Doctor then examines a question which was causing no small division among the learned. It was admitted by all that baptism imparted sanctifying grace and the infused virtues upon adults, but some theologians thought such effects were not realized in the baptism of children. St. Thomas branded this opinion as erroneous, since by the mere reception of baptism the plenitude of the grace of Christ is poured into the infant's soul, so that death would be the immediate portal to heaven[2].

Baptism not only bestows grace, but imprints, as well, a character upon the soul. According to the doctrine of St. Thomas, the sacramental character, in general, consists in a certain configuration of the Christian soul with that of Christ. This likeness is not a similitude of life between Christ and the faithful, — this being obtained by the mere fact that the Christian is in a state of grace; — it is rather a similitude of function. The function of Christ is to be the Savior, the Redeemer of men, the Priest or Mediator between God and men. The sacramental character is that habitual disposition flowing from the sacrament which renders all Christians akin to Christ under this aspect. The baptismal character is the incipient state of this similarity. Confirmation develops and strengthens it, while Holy Orders expand it so powerfully that the faithful becomes the priest-minister of the Christ-priest, and can offer with Christ the sacrifice of the altar, thus continuing and completing the sacrifice of the Cross[3].

---

1. L. Billot, *De Sacramentis Ecclesiæ*, t. I, p. 253.

2. *Sum. Theol.*, III, q. lxix, a. 6-7.

3. *Sum. theol.*, III, q. lxiii, a. 3 : Character proprie est signaculum quoddam, quo aliquid insignitur, ut ordinatum in aliquem finem; sicut charactere insignitur denarius ad usum commutationum; et milites charactere insigniuntur, quasi ad militiam deputati. Homo autem fidelis ad duo deputatur. Primo quidem et principaliter ad fruitionem gloriæ : et ad hoc insignitur signaculo gratiæ... Secundo autem deputatur quisque fidelis ad recipiendum, vel tradendum

Such is the teaching of St. Thomas on the effects of baptism. He has coordinated and sounded all the teachings of Holy Scripture and Fathers. His theology has been the foundation of later dogmatic speculation. Nor is it difficult to see that the Church, in her defined or undefined teachings concerning the effects of baptism, has borrowed largely from his doctrine.

ARTICLE II

The efficacy of the baptismal rite.

The Doctrine of the Church. — Baptism, then, produces the remission of sin by the imparting of grace. In what manner does the baptismal rite work; — in other words, what is its efficacy? The Protestants of the sixteenth century, as said above, held that baptism like all other sacraments, is but a call to justifying faith, — a symbol of purification through faith, — at any rate, a rite without real import as long as the subject has not himself made a personal act of faith, trusted in the merits of Jesus Christ, thereby, drawing them to himself. Against this doctrine, the Council of Trent has defined that the sacraments of the New Law bestow the grace that they symbolize upon those who raise no obstacle[1], and that this grace is produced *ex opere*

---

alii ea quæ pertinent ad cultum Dei : et ad hoc proprie deputatur character sacramentalis. Totus autem ritus christianæ religionis derivatur a sacerdotio Christi. Et ideo manifestum est quod character sacramentalis specialiter est character Christi, cujus sacerdotio configurantur fideles secundum sacramentales characteres, qui nihil aliud sunt quam quædam participationes sacerdotii Christi ab ipso Christo derivatæ.

1. Denz., 849 : *Si quis dixerit sacramenta novæ legis non continere gratiam quam significant, aut gratiam ipsam non ponentibus obicem non conferre, quasi signa tantum externa sint acceptæ per fidem gratiæ vel justitiæ, et notæ quædam christianæ professionis, quibus apud homines discernuntur fideles ab infidelibus, A. S.* The sacrament of itself possesses the power to produce grace and in this sense do we say that the sacrament contains the grace.

operato, that is, by the very fact that the rite is performed[1]. Hence the sacraments are the objective causes of grace. The dispositions of the adult, such as faith and repentance, merely remove any obstacle to the sacramental efficacy. The latter are a condition *sine qua non* for the production of grace, as dryness in the wood is the condition and not the cause of its own combustion[2]. However, these are only the instrumental causes, i. e., means by which God, in the person of his minister, produces grace.

We shall trace the foundations of this doctrine, at least in as much as it relates to baptismal efficacy, in Holy Scripture and Patristic Tradition; and then clothe it with the precise distinctions of the Schoolmen : nothing being more necessary in a subject of momentous bearing, and generally misunderstood by the enemies of our faith.

Holy Scripture. — The efficacy of the baptismal rite is clearly taught in the Epistles of St. Paul. Baptismal immersion, says the Apostle, is the sepulchre where the old Adam, *vetus homo*, i. e., man corrupted by sin, dies and is buried and whence arises the new man[3]. And elsewhere, he declares « Christ also loved the Church and delivered Himself up for it, that he might sanctify it, cleansing it by the

---

1. Denz., 851 : *Si quis dixerit, per ipsa novæ legis sacramenta ex opere operato non conferri gratiam, sed solam fidem divinæ promissionis ad gratiam consequendam sufficere, A. S.*

2. Bellarmine, *De Sacramentis in genere*, l. II, c. 1 : *Id quod active et proxime atque instrumentaliter efficit gratiam justificationis est sola actio externa, quæ sacramentum dicitur, et hæc vocatur opus operatum, accipiendo passive* (*operatum*), *ita ut idem sit sacramentum conferre gratiam ex opere operato, quod conferre gratiam ex vi ipsius actionis sacramentalis, a Deo ad hoc institutæ, non ex merito agentis vel suscipientis... Dispositiones ex parte subjecti* [*requiruntur*], *non ut causæ activæ ; non enim fides et pœnitentia efficiunt gratiam sacramentalem, neque dant efficaciam sacramentis, sed solum tollunt obstacula, quæ impedirent ne sacramenta suam efficaciam exercere possent ; unde, in pueris, ubi non requiritur dispositio, sine his rebus fit justificatio.*

3. *Rom.*, vi, 3-11.

laver of water in the word of life; that he might present it to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish[1]. » So great indeed is the efficacy of baptism that it washes away all sins, however great they may be. « Do not err, neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor the effeminate, nor liers with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor railers, nor extortioners shall possess the kingdom of God. And such some of you were, but you are washed, but you are sanctified, but you are justified in the name of Our Lord Jesus Christ, and the Spirit of our God[2]. »

The Gospel according to St. John is even more explicit. According to the words of Jesus to Nicodemus, spiritual regeneration is the work of two distinct principles, water and the Holy Ghost. Water is the cause of regeneration as well as the Spirit, but in a different manner. The principal cause is evidently the Holy Ghost. The water can be only the secondary cause, — an instrument raised by God to the dignity of a cause in the production of supernatural life[3].

The Tradition of the Fathers. — In this subject, as in the previous, St. Cyril of Jerusalem sums up and develops the doctrine of the Fathers of the second and third centuries. « Enter not into the water », he says, « as into an ordinary bath, for the purpose of washing your body. Think rather of the grace which is to be poured upon you together with the water, for the washing of your soul. For if the victim, offered on the altar of demons, however pure itself, becomes impure when the demons are invoked there upon, how much more so to the contrary will the water, though simple in its nature, become holy, as if it received a new virtue by the invocation of the Holy Ghost,

1. *Eph.*, v, 25-27.
2. I *Cor.*, vi, 9-11.
3. Jn., iii, 5.

of Jesus Christ and the Father. For man being composed of body and soul, must be purified in each element. The soul, which is spiritual, cannot be purified by that which is corporeal, and thus it is necessary that the water wash the body, and that the Holy Spirit place the seal of his grace on the soul. You, then, who descend into the baptistry for the washing with water, know that it is not the water alone which will sanctify you, rather it is the virtue of the Holy Ghost which will be communicated to that water. Know that you cannot become perfect without these two elements, as Jesus foretold to Nicodemus. Thus, if a person were baptized with water, without the Holy Ghost, there would be no infusion of grace, and moreover no one who has led even a very regular life can pretend to enter heaven, unless he has been washed with water, and has received thereby the seal of grace[1]. »

The efficaciousness of the baptismal rite depends neither upon the dispositions of the baptizing minister, nor upon the dispositions of the subject baptized. As will be observed in what follows, this doctrine met with opposition in the third and fourth centuries, when the validity of baptism conferred by an heretical minister, as well as the validity of the sacrament when received in heresy, schism or affection to sin, was denied. Finally all opposition ceased before the invincible defense of St. Augustine.

The illustrious bishop of Hippo was not content with reasserting the traditional teaching. He probed deeper and sought for reasons. The administration of baptism, he writes, is an act of Christ who works through the Church in the person of the minister[2]. Indeed, holiness of the mi-

---

1. *Catech.*, III, III, IV.

2. *Epist.* LXXXIX, 5 : *Secura Ecclesia spem non ponit in homine..., sed spem suam ponit in Christo, qui sic accepit formam servi, ut non amitteret formam Dei, de quo dictum est : « Ipse est qui baptizat »* (JOAN., I, 33). *Proinde homo quilibet minister baptismi ejus, qualemcumque sarcinam portet, non iste, sed super quem columba descendit, ipse est qui baptizat.*

nister is required, but Christ's sacrament is not defiled, if the contrary condition exist. Truly, our Savior can make use of a loathsome channel to conduct the waters of salvation into the soul[1]. Baptism is efficacious independently of the dispositions of the minister. All that is necessary is that the minister, in baptizing, abide by the essential ceremony. Not he who ministers, but that which is ministered should be considered, for the sacrament possesses an intrinsic holiness which the unworthiness of the minister can in no wise impair.

In the same way, continues St. Augustine, the efficacy of baptism is independent of the bad dispositions of the subject, in this sense that however unworthy be the catechumen he receives at least the baptismal character[2]. However, as the holy doctor tells us with wonderful precision, bad dispositions form an obstacle to the remission of sin through the imparting of grace[3]. Baptism is really received, and must not be repeated, but its usefulness has vanished. When however, the subject who has been baptized in heresy or schism, recognizes his error and removes the obstacle, then the useful and salutary effects of the sacrament will cluster in his soul[4].

---

1. *In Joan.*, tract. v, 15.

2. Epist. XCVIII, 5 : *Christiani baptismi sacramentum..., etiam apud hæreticos valet et sufficit ad consecrationem, quamvis ad vitæ æternæ participationem non sufficiat; quæ consecratio reum quidem facit hæreticum extra Domini gregem habentem dominicum characterem, corrigendum tamen admonet sana doctrina, non iterum similiter consecrandum.*

3. *Ibid.*, 10 : *Qui non credit... profecto infidelis est, etsi habeat fidei sacramentum; longeque melior est illo parvulus, qui etiamsi fidem nondum habet in cogitatione, non ei obicem opponit contrariæ cogitationis, unde sacramentum ejus salubriter percipit.*

4. *De Baptismo contra Donatistas*, l. III, 13 : *Nec nos abnuimus eum qui apud hæreticos vel in aliquo schismate extra communionem Ecclesiæ baptizatur, non ei prodesse in quantum hæreticorum perversitati consentit.* Cf. *Ibid.*, l. I, 2.

And yet St. Augustine evinces somewhat of an attachment for the doctrine of St. Cyprian. If, he teaches, baptism, received with bad dispositions is fruitless, it is because only the true Church is the bestower of salvation and because

The Doctrine of the Scholastics. — In the eleventh century, Leo IX, and, after him, Gregory VII were obliged to excommunicate a large number of incontinent and simoniacal priests. The faithful were formally prohibited from having recourse to these ministers. But these unworthy priests continued to administer the sacraments. The question which had occupied the third and fourth centuries rose again in the minds of the faithful and of the theologians, namely : Are those sacraments valid which are administered by priests cut off from the Church? Soon, the Schoolmen distinguished between the action of the minister who performs the rite, *actio, opus operans,* and the rite itself, *actum, opus operatum.* They then declared that the celebration of a sacramental rite by an unworthy minister was indeed bad, but the fruit of that celebration, namely the sacramental rite, was always good. The causality of that rite, of the *opus operatum,* could not be merely an occasional causality. If merely on the occasion of the rite, God would pour forth His grace, the sacrament would have been reduced to a simple sign. Then too, tradition could hardly be reconciled with that view, for it seems to have understood the sacrament as a rite productive of grace and containing in itself the power to produce that grace, in one word, as an efficient cause of grace. Yet, how could the sacrament which is a corporeal rite produce a spiritual effect and be an efficient cause of grace? In the solution of this difficulty, St. Thomas distinguished between the principal efficient cause and the instrumental efficient cause. The former produces its effect by the power proper to and inherent in its nature ; the latter does not act by its own power, but by the power which is communicated to it by the principal cause. The effect produced is always similar to the productive power of the agent. The effect of the instrumental cause would, then, be

---

outside of her, sins cannot be remitted. Cf. *Ibid.* I, 10-21. Consult P. Pourrat, *Theology of the Sacraments,* pp. 146-147.

similar, not to the nature of the instrument, but to that of the principal cause, for it is the principal cause which communicates to the instrument the power to produce its effect. A bedstead is not similar to the hatchet which the joiner wielded, but to the idea which was in the mind of the workman who communicated to the instrument the power of making this piece of furniture. Applying this distinction to the sacraments, the holy Doctor shows that they are only efficient instrumental causes, deriving from God their principal efficient cause, the power to produce their effects. Hence these effects are similar to the power communicated by God to the sacraments. Since the latter is spiritual, the effects of the sacraments will also be spiritual. The sacramental rites, though corporeal, become the efficient causes of grace[1]. We need not insist that the power thus possessed is only transitory, i. e., only for the moment when they are used by God to produce grace in the soul. The instrument, indeed, operates only in as much as the principal agent gives it the movement necessary to produce the desired effect[2]. This will suffice to show how the sacraments are objective causes of grace. Fuller discussion of the question will be given in our *Sacramental Synthesis*.

---

1. *Sum. theol.*, III, q. LXII, a. 1 : *Duplex est causa agens, principalis et instrumentalis. Principalis quidem operatur per virtutem suæ formæ, cui assimilatur effectus; sicut ignis suo calore calefacit, et hoc modo nihil potest causare gratiam, nisi Deus : quia gratia nihil est aliud quam quædam participata similitudo divinæ naturæ secundum illud*, II Petr., I, 4 : « *Magna nobis et pretiosa promissa donavit, ut divinæ simus consortes naturæ* ». *Causa vero instrumentalis non agit per virtutem suæ formæ, sed solum per motum quo movetur a principali agente. Unde effectus non assimilatur instrumento, sed principali agenti; sicut lectus non assimilatur securi, sed arti quæ est in mente artificis. Et hoc modo sacramenta novæ legis gratiam causant : adhibentur enim ex divina ordinatione hominibus ad gratiam in eis causandam.*

2. *Sum. theol.*, III, q. LXII, a. 4 : *Instrumentum non operatur, nisi inquantum est motum a principali agente, quod per se operatur : et ideo virtus principalis agentis habet permanens et completum esse in natura; virtus autem instrumentalis habet esse transiens ex uno in aliud, et incompletum; sicut et motus est actus imperfectus ab agente in patiens.*

CHAPTER IV.

THE MINISTER OF BAPTISM.

The Church teaches that baptism can be validly administered by any person possessing the use of reason[1]. This general rule has not been always admitted, but has had to face objections in the course of centuries. In a law of this kind, the necessity of regulating even details to avoid abuses can easily be seen. After an outline of the prescriptions of the Church, we shall give a short historical sketch of the question of the minister of baptism.

Prescriptions of the Church. — The Church distinguishes *private baptism,* which consists in the observance of the essential rite, and *solemn baptism,* which consists in the observance both of the essential rite and the other ceremonies.

Regulations for Private Baptism.

1. This baptism is always administered licitly in the case of necessity, i. e., when one is in danger of death. At all other times, for the lawful administration of this baptism, it is generally necessary to obtain the permission of the bishop of the diocese, where the baptism is to be administered.

2. Anyone having the use of reason can validly admi-

---

1. Denz., 696, 712.

nister private baptism. However, the minister must intend to perform the rite that the Church prescribes, and must have the further intention, virtual at least, if not actual, of administering a sacrament. If the minister goes through the external ceremony in a non-voluntary manner, for example, in a state of complete drunkenness; or, if he positively and interiorly disavows the religious significance of the rite, accurately performed; much more so if he regards it as a mockery, or, finally, if he merely intends the execution of an external act, and nothing else, the sacrament must be considered null and void[1].

3. There is however, a certain order of precedence to be observed in the administration of private baptism in case of necessity. The pastor, or the assistant, should be preferred to a visiting priest; a cleric to a lay person; a man to a woman, except in the case of baptizing an infant at birth; Catholics, even lay people should be preferred to an heretical or schismatic priest.

Regulations for Solemn Baptism :

1. The ordinary ministers of solemn baptism are the bishops and priests. This ministry devolves upon them by virtue of their orders.

The deacon is also, by virtue of his ordination, the minister of solemn baptism; however, he is only the secondary minister. As the name indicates, the deacon, by his ordination, is empowered to be the minister or the auxiliary of the bishop or the priest, in the celebration of the Holy Sacrifice, and in the administration of the sacraments. Hence he confers solemn baptism only in an exceptional and extraor-

---

1. The minister may sufficiently have that intention even when, — like the Protestants, — he does not acknowledge the truth of the Roman Church; or, as the pagans, is ignorant of the existence of the Church. Provided he wishes to do that which the Christians do, he has the intention of doing what Christ did and the Church does. A heretic, or a pagan, then, who intends to do what the Christians do, provided he wishes it honestly and simply, possesses, indeed the sufficient intention.

dinary circumstance. As a general rule, he is forbidden to administer solemn baptism, without an authorization, reserved to the bishop of the place where the baptism is to be administered.

2. To administer solemn baptism, the minister must also have the power of jurisdiction. Solemn baptism, indeed, is the official incorporation of a person into a parish or a diocese. Hence the power to do this is a part of the jurisdiction of a bishop or a pastor. Consequently, a pastor who baptizes a child belonging to another parish does wrong, unless, of course, he has received the authorization of the pastor of the other place, or the permission of the bishop. The children of parents without a domicile can be solemnly baptized in the church within the limits of which they are living at the time.

The Minister of Baptism in History — During the Apostolic period, we do not find the administration of baptism reserved to any one particular class of ministers. At Philippi, where he had been a prisoner, St. Paul baptized the keeper of his prison and his household[1]. At Corinth, he baptized Crispus and Caïus, and the house of Stephen[2]. However, generally he directed his assistants to baptize[3], in order to reserve to himself the preaching of the Gospel[4]. Likewise, in some cases, the other Apostles themselves baptized, in others, they left this to their ministers. The deacon Philip often baptized[5]. Ananias, who baptized St. Paul, was probably a layman[6].

In the beginning of the second century, the administration of baptism begins to be regulated by a fixed discipline. A

---

1. *Acts*, XVII, 33.
2. I *Cor.*, I. 14-16.
3. *Acts*, X, 48.
4. I *Cor.*, I, 17.
5. *Acts*, VIII.
6. *Ibid.*, IX.

distinction is made between the administration of solemn and private baptism. The former was accompanied with prayers and was followed by the administration of confirmation, and the reception of the Eucharist. The *administering* of these three sacraments constituted the Christian initiation. In the administration of private baptism, which was not given except in cases of necessity, only the essential rite of the sacrament was performed. The administration of solemn baptism, together with the other ceremonies of the Christian initiation, was reserved to the bishop. « Baptism must never be administered without the bishop », says St. Ignatius [1]. This does not mean, however, that the bishop baptized in person. Baptism was given in his presence by priests assisted by deacons; and was then followed by confirmation, and the celebration of the Eucharistic sacrifice. The administration of private baptism was permitted not only to all the members of the hierarchy, but to the simple faithful. A constitution of Pope Victor, at the end of the second century, holds that, in case of necessity, any Christian can baptize a pagan who has previously recited the Creed [2].

This discipline regarding solemn and private baptism was in force during the second and third centuries. At that time each city, with its suburbs, was under the jurisdiction of one church alone, at the head of which was a bishop, and under him priests and deacons. Such a fact explains why solemn baptism and the other rites of Christian initiation were not conferred without the presence of the bishop.

In the course of the third century, several different questions arose. The validity of private baptism, as administered by a simple member of the faithful, was questioned. Tertullian, however, opposed this view, and declared that

---

1. *Smyrn.*, VIII, 2.

2. *Liber pontificalis*, t. I, p. 127, *ed.* L. DUCHESNE : *Constituit* [*Victor*] *ut necessitate faciente, ut ubiubi inventus fuisset, sive in flumine, sive in mari, sive in fontibus, tantum christiana confessione credulitatis clarificata, quieumque hominum ex gentile veniens ut baptizaretur.*

the simple Christian, who failed to baptize in case of necessity, was responsible for the loss of a soul[1]. On the other hand, Tertullian vigorously fought those who assumed that even women could administer baptism[2]. Woman, he teaches, has not the right to baptize[3]. It is doubtful whether, in these passages, Tertullian forbade women to administer any kind of baptism whatsoever, or, as it appears, whether his prohibition referred to solemn baptism alone.

Another question considerably more important now came to the fore. A custom had grown up in the African church of rebaptizing heretics. At Rome, on the contrary, heretics received a mere imposition of hands. Towards the year 250, a new heresy — that of Novatianism — appeared, and planted a doubt in the minds of those who rebaptized. The Novatians had exactly the same faith as the Church and, were, in the beginning, only schismatics. How, then, could it be that the same rite administered as a seal of the same belief, was not efficacious? St. Cyprian justified the African usage and attacked the legitimacy of the Roman custom. Pope Stephen was compelled to reply, his admonitions were not followed and he threatened excommunication. The Council of Carthage, presided over by St. Cyprian, spoke in language far from conciliatory. St. Dionysius of Alexandria, and the bishops of Egypt supported Rome; but Firmilian of Caesarea, and the bishops of Asia Minor stood by Cyprian. In the meanwhile, Pope Stephen died and St. Cyprian was martyred by order of Galerius Maximus (258). Yet, even the death of the two adversaries did not put an end to the controversy.

Before proceeding with the history of this strife, we must describe accurately the doctrinal position of the two parties.

St. Cyprian claimed that baptism administered by he-

---

1. *De Baptismo*, XVII.
2. *Ibid.*, XVII.
3. *De Praescriptionibus*, XLI; *P. L.*, II, 56.

retics is null, chiefly for two reasons. There is only one true baptism, as there is only one true Church. How, then, could the baptism administered by a counterfeit sect be other than a forgery of the true baptism? Moreover, no baptism is efficacious without the Holy Ghost, and the Holy Ghost does not dwell outside the Church. Hence efficacious baptism, or baptism which imparts the Holy Ghost — in a word, true baptism — belongs to the Catholic Church alone[1].

At Rome, on the contrary, it was held that the efficacy of baptism should be specially attributed to the Trinitarian invocation which accompanies the ablution. The efficacy of the rite arises from the fact that Jesus Christ so wished it, when He established the baptismal rite[2].

At the beginning of the fourth century, in Rome, the prescriptions of Pope Stephen were observed ; those who had been baptized by heretics were not re-baptized. On the contrary, the Africans held fast to the prescriptions of St. Cyprian and rebaptized those who had been already baptized by heretics[3].

At this time, there arose in Africa a party of Christians of rather austere life who protested against what they called the abandonment of tradition. They reproved those who had fled during the persecution of Diocletian, in the year 305, to escape martyrdom. They criticised severely the bishops who had authorized or advised flight. They reproached them for their compromises with the civil authorities, which seemed nothing less than treason, and, since many of these Christians had handed over the holy books during the persecution, these reformers branded them all with the name of *traditores*. In the year 312, they constituted a numerous sect, which tended more and more towards a scission from

---

1. Epist. LXIX-LXXIII, *ed.* Hartel.

2. Epist. LXXIV.

3. L. Duchesne, *The early history of the Church*, I, pp. 303-313. — P. Pourrat, *Theology of the Sacraments*, pp. 117-127.

the Roman Church. Schism was declared long before they themselves took the name of Donatists, from the name of their leader, bishop Donatus. Pertinaciously, did they cling to the doctrine of St. Cyprian, through the entire fourth century. Furthermore, when they had completed their separation from the Church of Rome, they declared invalid not only the baptism conferred by a heretic, but also that administered by any one who had lost the Holy Ghost through sin. Those who did not accept their ideas were, in their opinion, evidently in this condition. Hence, they considered as null the baptism conferred by a minister outside their ranks. In short, the Donatists were only deducing the consequences from the principles laid down by St. Cyprian. Indeed, if baptism is efficacious only because the Church possesses the Holy Ghost, it follows necessarily, that baptism is null whenever the minister has lost the Holy Ghost through sin. We can easily imagine the disquietude and disorder which could and actually did result from such a teaching.

Meanwhile, the bishops of Asia Minor held to the tradition of their predecessors. They too, declared baptism administered by a heretic to be null and void. In order to prevent the profanation of this sacrament, they forbade the simple faithful to administer private baptism. But a little while after they even declared such to be invalid. This, indeed, introduced a custom in direct opposition to the usage of the primitive Church, but the difficulties of this time sufficiently account for it. Thus St Basil, bishop of Caesarea in Cappadocia, declared null the baptism given by a lay-person, whether man or woman [1]. St. Gregory Nazianzene, in his *Historical Poems,* narrates an incident which took place when he was about twenty years old. Impelled by an ardent desire to study, he had started to visit all the most celebrated cities of his time. After having sojourned some

1. Epist. CLXXXVIII, *P. G.*, XXXII, 668-669.

months at Alexandria, he resolved to go to Athens, and while crossing the sea a violent storm arose. « We had abandoned hope », he writes, « we were awaiting death with fear. I, however, was secretly more disturbed than the others. Alas, threatened with shipwreck, I had not yet been purified in the waters which unite us to God. That was the reason of my grief, and tears; that it was which caused my pitiable cries. I tore my clothes. I lay flat upon the deck, and raising my hands to heaven, I struck one against the other. The noise was heard above the waves, and lo! what will perhaps appear incredible although true, my fellow passengers forgot their own danger to bewail my misfortune. In our common peril their piety prompted them to unite their desires to my regrets and they were much affected by my unhappy situation[1] ». Well may we ask how it was that in such an extremity it never occurred to Gregory to have himself baptized by one of the passengers? The narrative does not warrant us in supposing that they were pagans. The answer is simple. Gregory did not have himself baptized because he was convinced that baptism conferred by a lay person was not valid[2].

In the fifth century, St. Augustine endeavored to correct the errors of the Donatists. Against them, he wrote many letters, and treatises, the most important of which is the work entitled *De baptismo contra Donatistas*. The Donatists claim, he writes, that the validity of baptism depends on the dispositions of the minister. It is not so. Baptism is a means of grace, objectively efficacious. As long as a Christian performs the washing with water and pronounces the evangelical words over the candidate, baptism is validly conferred[3].

---

1. *Poemata historica*, sect. I; *P. G.*, XXXVII, 1048.

2. Tillemont, *Mémoires*, t. IX, pp. 326-327.

3. *De Baptismo contra Donatistas*, l. IV, 22 ; *P. L.*, XLIII, 168 : *Jam satis ostendimus ad baptismum qui verbis evangelicis consecratur, non per-*

The doctrine of St. Augustine, which was, in reality, only that of Pope Stephen, prevailed. Little by little the Donatists ceased to be a religious party, to become a sect of anarchists, thus rousing the combined opposition of both the ecclesiastical and civil authorities.

In the ninth century, the question whether baptism conferred by a pagan was valid arose. St. Augustine had incidentally examined the question and answered that he desired, on this point, the advice of a Council [1]. Since that time several contrary opinions had been held [2]. In his response to the Bulgarians (866), Pope Nicholas I stood for the validity of this baptism [3]. From this time on, it was generally admitted that baptism conferred by any one, baptised or unbaptised, male or female, was valid, provided the essential rite was observed. Because of the great importance of this question of discipline, the Lateran Council (1215) defined it formally [4].

---

tinere cujusquam vel dantis vel accipientis errorem, sive de Patre, sive de Filio, sive de Spiritu Sancto aliter sentiat, quam cælestis doctrina insinuat.

At the end of his treatise (cf. l. VII, 100), St. Augustine sums up his teaching on the dispositions of the minister requisite for the validity and salutary effect of baptism. He divides all ministers into three categories, according to the degree of their union with the Church. First of all, there are the holy ministers, who belong to the Church in body and in soul : these are the framework of the Church. Then, there are others who are united to the Church by a bond that is merely material or corporeal; their life is far from holy; they are vessels of ignominy, scattered throughout the Church as straw among the wheat. Finally, others, as heretics and schismatics, are totally separated from the Church, corporeally as well as spiritually. Those constituting the first and second class can administer valid and salutary baptism to all, except catechumens who are badly disposed and unworthy to receive the remission of their sins. The baptism administered by heretics and schismatics is likewise always valid, but those who receive it do not obtain grace unless they be either in good faith or in danger of death; otherwise, their baptism will not be useful until they enter the Catholic communion.

1. *Ibid.*, 100-102.

2. Cf. J. Corblet, *Histoire du Sacrement de Baptême*, t. I, pp. 352-353.

3. Denz., 335.

4. Denz. 430 : *Sacramentum vero baptismi (quod ad Dei invocationem et individuæ Trinitatis, videlicet Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti consecratur*

The same doctrine was reproduced and enlarged in the *Decree to the Armenians* [1].

But could it be said that he who performed the entire baptismal rite intending nothing further than an exact compliance with the Church's regulation, had done what was necessary and sufficient for the administration of the sacrament? St. Augustine had attempted a solution; but his answer was vague and obscure [2]. In the twelfth century, the discussion was resumed rather vigorously. While some claimed that the will to perform exactly the ceremonies of the baptismal rite sufficed, others demanded, in addition, the intention of conferring a sacrament. It is the intention which determines the baptismal rite. When one bathes an infant, intending to wash or to strengthen it, and not to baptize, who would dare say, asks Hugh of St. Victor, that the infant is baptized, even though, to make the bath more healthful, the three divine persons have been invoked [3]? Two things are required in the administration of the sacraments, writes the author of the *Summa Sententiarum,* the performance of the baptismal rite and the intention to administer the sacrament [4].

This solution was wise; still many objections were brought against it. If the performance of the sacramental rite, conformably to the prescriptions of the Church, does not suffice, but if it is further necessary that the minister have that men-

---

in aqua) tam parvulis quam adultis in forma Ecclesiæ a quocumque rite collatum proficit ad salutem.

1. Denz., 696 : *Minister hujus sacramenti est sacerdos, cui ex officio competit baptizare. In causa autem necessitatis non solum sacerdos vel diaconus, sed etiam laicus vel mulier, immo etiam paganus et hæreticus baptizare potest, dummodo formam servet Ecclesiæ et facere intendat quod facit Ecclesia.*

2. *De Baptismo contra Donatistas,* l. VII, 102. See the exposition of the doctrine of St. Augustine by P. Pourrat, *Theology of the Sacraments,* pp. 361-371.

3. *De Sacramentis,* l. II, 6, 13.

4. *Sent.,* l. IV, dist. VI, 6.

tal intention to confer the sacrament, how could it be known that interior intention exists, and that, therefore, the sacraments are truly conferred? Moreover, if such an intention is required, an evil-disposed minister can baptize invalidly without anyone perceiving it. Since an infidel baptizes validly, is it reasonable to exact of him anything more than the integral observance of the baptismal rite? Hence up to the thirteenth century, the theologians were divided in opinion. St. Thomas adopted a middle course which those who content themselves with requiring mere external intention, have wrongly attempted to interpret in their own favor. The intention of the minister, he says, is that of the Church for whom he stands. But the intention of the Church is expressed by the sacramental words as pronounced by the minister. Hence there is no need to be chary or worried about the mental intention of him who confers the sacrament, except in the case where it would be evident that the minister is acting in mockery [1].

In the sixteenth century, Luther gave a new turn to the controversy. Since, in his opinion, the sacrament is merely a rite intended to excite the faith of the subject, a mere external correct performance of the ceremony suffices; it matters not who performs it, nor whether the minister intends it or not, nor, *a fortiori*, whether he acts in mere pretence or derision. This time, however, the error was manifest. The minister cannot be a mere passive instrument. Besides performing the sacramental rite instituted by Christ and renewed by the Church, he must have the intention of doing it or, in other words, according to the definition of the Council

---

1. *Sum. theol.*, III, q. LXIV, a 8 : *Alii melius dicunt quod minister sacramenti agit in persona totius Ecclesiæ, cujus est minister; in verbis autem quæ profert, exprimitur intentio Ecclesiæ; quæ sufficit ad perfectionem sacramenti, nisi contrarium exterius exprimatur ex parte ministri vel recipientis sacramentum.* Cf. *In IV Sent.*, dist. VI, q. I, a. 2, vol. I, ad 2[um]. The Decree to the Armenians cited above reproduces the doctrine of St. Thomas.

of Trent the minister must have the intention and the will to do what the Church does [1].

One can will to perform *outwardly* the baptismal rite, while *inwardly,* yet without any external manifestation he has the intention of acting in mockery, or even the positive intention not to perform the sacrament instituted by Christ. This is a merely exterior intention. But if, while he performs the baptismal rite, one wills, in his inmost heart, to perform the rite instituted by Christ, — to do what the Church does — the *interior* intention is present.

According to Pallavicini, [2] the Council of Trent considered only the exterior intention and left pending the question of the interior intention. Hence, after the Council, the controversy was resumed with great intensity. The Dominican Catharinus, in a work entitled *De intentione ministri* taught that, for the validity of the sacrament, the exterior intention alone is required. In his opinion, what the Church demands is the intention of the minister to do outwardly what the Church does, no matter what his interior intention may be [3]. Against this thesis, a great number of theologians maintained the necessity of a certain interior intention. The minister, they say, acts as the representative of Christ or the Church. How could he fulfil his rôle as representative if, while endeavoring to accomplish with all exactness the

---

1. Denz., 854 : *Si quis dixerit, in ministris, dum sacramenta conficiunt et conferunt, non requiri intentionem saltem faciendi quod facit Ecclesia : A. S.*

2. *Histoire du Concile de Trente*, l. IX, ch. VI, n. 2.

3. Quoted by Pourrat, *Theology of the Sacraments*, p. 387 : *Non alia intentio ministri requiritur, nisi ut intendat exterius facere quod facit Ecclesia, quamvis ipse neque credat esse Ecclesiam, neque ullum baptismi spiritualem effectum, sed satis est ut intendat facere quod Ecclesia jubet per ministros fieri: namque quod illa per ministros facit, ipsa facere intelligitur. Quid ergo facit Ecclesia per ministros baptizando ? Nisi quod legitima utitur materia, adhibens suam verborum formam : hoc igitur si facit minister, profecto illud facere intendit, si sit mente sanus.*

ritual ceremonies, he should inwardly act in mockery, if he should not wish to perform what Christ instituted and do what the Church does? In 1678, Francis Farvacques of the University of Louvain, held « that baptism is valid which is conferred by a minister who observes all the exterior rite and is faithful to the form of the sacrament, but who says resolutely to himself, (I have no intention to do what the Church does). This proposition was condemned by Alexander VIII[1]. The natural and only conclusion is that that sacrament must be considered null and void which is administered with an inward express intention of not conferring a sacrament; and yet, we can imagine the case of a minister with whom such an intention would not be express. Thus the thesis of Catharinus, though not directly overthrown by the condemnation of Alexander VIII, was nevertheless disqualified. To-day the common opinion among theologians — the one which is and which ought to be followed in practice — is that the minister ought to join to the exterior intention an interior intention, which, if not actual, at least should be virtual. An habitual intention which is equivalent to the absence of all interior intention, does not suffice[2]. When the lack of interior intention is evident, or, *a fortiori,* when the minister decidedly intends not to confer the sacrament — especially when that sacrament can be administered but once, as baptism, and

1. Denz., 1318.

2. The intention is *actual* when the will is consciously working on a thing willed at this very moment. It is *virtual* when the will is exercised unconsciously on a thing which was willed previously and which is willed still, as, for example, when a person acts in a state of distraction. The *habitual* intention is that which has ceased to be virtual. There are two ways by which a virtual intention may become habitual; a considerable lapse of time, which it is difficult to determine precisely, and an accident, such as somnambulism, hypnotism or drunkenness. Thus a person who, while drunk, or while affected with somnambulism, performs an act, continues with the habitual intention that which he commenced with an actual or virtual intention.

sacred orders, — the sacrament must be considered null and void [1].

1. This controversy affects not only the minister of the sacrament of baptism, but the minister of any sacrament whatsoever. Moreover, the adult who receives the sacrament must intend to receive the sacred rite. If he be content to go through the performance with the mere formal intention of participating in some kind of exterior act, or of acting a part, the sacrament would be null and void.

CHAPTER V.

THE RECIPIENT OF BAPTISM.

Mankind, as a whole, have been saved by the death of Christ. In order that men may be saved individually, they must appropriate, by their works, the satisfactions and the merits of Christ. Among the works required, some are necessary by necessity of precept, others, by necessity of means.

An act that is necessary by necessity of precept, whether divine or ecclesiastical, is one which cannot be omitted without mortal sin, unless some very serious reasons prevent us from doing it. An act is necessary by necessity of means, when it is a necessary means established by God in order that man may attain salvation. There are two kinds of necessity of means, one absolute, the other relative. The former exists when the means is of such a nature that it cannot be replaced by any other, and its omission, even if not culpable, is an obstacle to salvation. The second is one which admits of a substitute, whenever the means of salvation become impracticable.

The question is *whether baptism is necessary to salvation*? Or, more particularly, *is it necessary to baptize infants* before they have reached the age of reason? If baptism is necessary to salvation, it goes without saying that all adults must seek instruction, in order to acquire the dispositions

necessary for the fruitful reception of the sacrament. Hence, we divide this question into three articles.

ARTICLE I.

The necessity of Baptism.

The Doctrine of the Church. — The Council of Trent anathematizes anyone who says that the reception of baptism is a matter of choice, or, in other words, not necessary to salvation[1]. On the contrary, baptism is the great remedy for original sin[2]. It follows that without this sacrament no one can obtain justification. Thus it is that, after the promulgation of the Gospel, no one could be justified, except by baptism, received or desired[3]. Hence, infants must be baptized in order to obtain the remission of original sin and eternal life. They cannot be saved by the mere fact that they belong to Christian parents[4]. From the above definitions, it follows that, after the promulgation of the Gospel, baptism of water became necessary for salvation, both by necessity of means and by necessity of precept, as well as for adults as for infants, whose parents are themselves the subjects of bap-

---

1. Denz., 861 : *Si quis dixerit baptismum liberum esse, hoc est non necessarium ad salutem : A. S.*

2. *Ibid.*, 790.

3. *Ibid.*, 796 : *Quæ quidem translatio [ab eo statu in quo homo nascitur filius primi Adæ, in statum gratiæ, seu justificatio], post Evangelium promulgatum, sine lavacro regenerationis, aut ejus voto, fieri non potest, sicut scriptum est : « Nisi quis renatus fuerit ex aqua et Spiritu Sancto, non potest introire in regnum Dei. »* Jn, III, 5. Cf. *Ibid.*, 799.

4. *Ibid.*, 791 : *Si quis parvulos recentes ab uteris matrum baptizandos negat, etiam si fuerint a baptizatis parentibus orti, aut dicit in remissionem quidem peccatorum eos baptizari, sed nihil ex Adam trahere originalis peccati, quod regenerationis lavacro necesse sit expiari ad vitam æternam consequendam, unde fit consequens, ut in eis forma baptismatis in remissionem peccatorum non vera, sed falsa intelligatur : A. S.*

tism. The first part of this doctrine relative to adults is *defined,* and the second part — that referring to infants — is only *certain*[1].

Other conclusions, less direct and only certain, are also to be held. Baptism of water is necessary by a merely relative necessity of means, that is, in the event that its reception becomes impossible, another means can be supplied. In the case of adults, or even of children, who have reached the age of reason, baptism of water can be supplied in two ways : by the baptism of desire, and by martyrdom, often called the baptism of blood. For infants who have not yet reached the age of reason, baptism can only be replaced by martyrdom[2].

We shall examine the foundation of this doctrine in *Holy Scripture* and in *Patristic Tradition*, and then trace its technical exposition by the Schoolmen.

Holy Scripture. — On the very day of Pentecost, the Apostles baptized the Jews who believed in Jesus as the Messias[3]. Soon they began to baptize indiscriminately Jews and pagans[4]. The reason of this is plainly because baptism remits sins, gives a new life, incorporates the faithful with Christ, in one word, justifies. Therefore the Apostles considered baptism a means of salvation, and though they do not expressly state in words that it is the only means, still they so acted before those whom they evangelized that their conviction in this regard is very clear.

---

1. A. Tanquerey, *Synopsis Theol. Dogm., De Baptismo*, n. 34.

2. Since baptism is practically the only means of salvation for infants who have not reached the age of reason, it is a grave duty for the parents to have their children baptized as soon as possible after their birth and, even before their birth, in case of danger of death. For the same reason, it is a grave duty for all Christians, but especially for physicians and mid-wives, to know how to baptize.

3. *Acts*, II, 41.

4. *Acts*, X, 48.

It would be difficult to explain this practice of the Apostles, if Christ had not imposed it. The teaching of Our Lord on this point is found in the last verses of the Gospel according to St. Matthew aud St. Mark[1]. The Savior while sending His disciples to teach and baptize the nations, adds : « He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not, shall be condemned. » By these words, he declares quite explicitly that baptism is the sole means of salvation. This doctrine is repeated in a more precise form in the Gospel according to St. John, where Christ says, « Unless a man be born again in water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God[2] ». Hence baptism is represented in the New Testament as the only means of salvation, as the means to which all must have recourse, if they would enter the kingdom of heaven.

The tradition of the Fathers. — The early Fathers always represented baptism as a necessary consequence to the duty of believing in the preaching of the Gospel[3].

In the third century, as soon as the doctrine of original sin became better known, the reception of baptism was made obligatory for infants as well as for adults. The necessity of infant baptism was taught by Origen[4] in the East and by St. Cyprian in the West[5]. The necessity, they say, is due to the fact that children are born in sin which baptism alone can wash away[6].

---

1. Mt., xxviii, 19 ; Mk., xvi, 16.

2. Jn., iii, 5.

3. Hermas goes so far as to subject the just of the Old Law to the baptism of water. According to him, the Apostles, after their death, descended into Limbo to administer baptism. Cf. Simil. iv, xvi.

4. *In Levit.* viii., , 3; *P. G.*, XII, 496.

5. Epist. LXIV, 5.

6. In his *De Baptismo,* 18, written before the year 202, the year when he became a Montanist, Tertullian exhorts the Christians to defer the baptism of their children. This was because he thought that the ordinary object of the sacrament of baptism was the remission of actual sins.

In the fifth century, the necessity of baptizing infants was admitted both by St. Augustine, the doctor of the dogma of original sin, and also the Pelagians who were the opponents of that dogma. Baptism is so necessary to salvation, says the bishop of Hippo, that children who die before they have received it are excluded from heaven[1]. The Pelagians, who claimed that all men are born in innocence, favored infant baptism. There were, in their opinion, two states in heaven: the *vita æterna* and the *regnum Dei*, which latter represents a state of superior bliss; in order to enjoy *eternal life,* they said, it was not necessary to be baptized, but without the sacrament of baptism no one can enter the *kingdom of God*[2]. This distinction was equivalent to an avowal of doctrinal failure. They denied original sin; but the practice of the rite necessary to wash away that sin was so firmly established in the Church, that they had to adopt baptism; they merely strove to disconnect it from original sin[3].

But while the Fathers always considered baptism as a necessary means of salvation, did they regard it as a means so necessary that it could not be replaced by any other? This question was discussed especially at the beginning of the second century, when the rite of the catechumenate was established. It happened indeed that sometimes catechumens

---

1. *Serm.* CCXCIII, 12; *P. L.*, XXXVIII, 1335.

2. *De peccatorum meritis et remissione*, l. III, III-IV; *P. L.*, XLIV.

3. Unable to justify this doctrine, the Pelagians claimed that there was, in heaven or some other place, an intermediate state where children dying without baptism live happily, sharing, more or less with the elect, in the happiness of the beatific vision. This claim was condemned by a synodal decision generally attributed to the second Council of Milevis (416), and again by the Plenary Council of Carthage (418), both of which were approved by Pope Zozimus.

Si quis dicit ideo dixisse Dominum : In domo patris mei mansiones multæ sunt, ut intelligatur quia in regno cælorum erit aliquis medius aut ullus alicubi locus ubi beate vivant parvuli qui sine baptismo ex hac vita migrarunt, sine quo in regnum cælorum, quod est vita æterna, intrare non possint : A. S. Cf. DENZ., 102, n. 3.

Read the discussion on the authenticity of this canon, in HEFELE, *History of the Church Councils*, v. II, p. 459.

suffered martyrdom before they had been baptized. Later in the third and fourth centuries, believing that baptism was the great means for the remission of sins, catechumens asked as a favor that their baptism be deferred. Some of them wished to be baptized only at the end of their lives, in order to be sure of heaven. Such catechumens lived, then, in the desire to receive baptism. They delayed its reception because they feared to lose the baptismal grace afterwards. But sometimes sudden death upset their calculation, taking them away before they had received baptism. It was natural to ask whether baptism could not be replaced by some other means, whether by martyrdom which was called baptism of blood, or by a prolonged desire of baptism, the reception of which was suddenly prevented, this being spoken of as the baptism of desire.

Martyrdom, or baptism of blood, was unanimously regarded as a means of salvation which could take the place of baptism. Did not Christ Himself call His passion a baptism of blood? Had He not said that greater love for God no one has than by shedding his blood for him[1]? But there was more hesitation as regards the baptism of desire. The Greek Fathers thought that martyrdom alone could be a substitute for baptism. « No one can be saved », says St. Cyril of Jerusalem, « without baptism. Martyrs alone are an exception to this rule. Indeed, Christ, in redeeming us on the wood of the Cross, suffered water and blood to flow from His pierced side in order that those who lived while the Church had peace might be baptized in water, and that others, amid persecutions, might be baptized in their own blood[2]. » On the other hand, the Latin Fathers, at least at the beginning of the fourth century, claimed that baptism could be replaced not only by martyrdom, but also by the

1. Lk., xii, 50. Jn., xv, 13. Cf. A. d'Alès, art. *Initiation chrétienne*, in *Dict. Apol. de la Foi Cathol.*, vol. II, pp. 814-818.

2. Catech., III, iv.

baptism of desire. St. Ambrose especially advocated this doctrine, in his funeral oration over the Emperor Valentinian the younger. This prince, while still only a catechumen, was assassinated in Gaul. Some days previous, he had asked St. Ambrose of Milan to come and baptize him. The holy bishop was already on his way when he learned of Valentinian's death. In pronouncing the eulogy over the dead Emperor, he alluded to the latter's request and affirmed that Valentinian's desire for baptism was of equal worth as the baptism of water[1].

St. Augustine professed the doctrine of St. Ambrose, teaching that in case of necessity, baptism of desire replaces true baptism. As an instance, he points to the good thief who did not die to give testimony to Jesus Christ, but to expiate his crimes, and to whom the dying Savior promised the eternal kingdom[2]. However, in his *Retractationes*, the bishop of Hippo qualifies his affirmation by suggesting the possibility that the good thief had been baptized in prison[3].

The Technical Teaching of the Scholastics. — Baptism of water is necessary by relative necessity of means, in this sense, that when it becomes impossible to receive real baptism, it can be replaced either by martyrdom the — baptism of blood —, or by baptism of desire.

Baptism of desire consists in an act of perfect charity or else, if it be required, an act of perfect contrition, accompanied, at least, by an implicit desire of baptism, that is, by the will to do all that God commands. For a catechumen such a desire must evidently be explicit. In the words of St. Thomas, no one can be saved unless he believe in the

---

1. *De obitu Valentiniani*, 51; *P. L.*, XVI, 1374.

2. *De Baptismo*, l. IV, 22, 29; *P. L.*, XLIII. *De anima*, l. I, 11-12. l. II, 9-10 : *P. L.*, XLIV.

3. *Retract.*, . II, XVIII, *P. L.*, XXXII. Cf. A. D'Alès, *op. cit.*, pp. 818-823.

passion of Jesus, and intend to participate in the fruits of the redemption by baptism.

Martyrdom, or baptism of blood, is the patient endurance of a bloody death or of a torture calculated to cause death, for the sake of Christ.

The difference between the baptism of blood and the baptism of desire consists in this that while the baptism of desire is an interior act of love, or perfect contrition, accompanied by the desire of baptism, *opus operantis*, the baptism of blood is, in a sense, a renewal of the passion of Christ, *ipsam passionem cruentam Domini tanquam opus operatum super corpus martyris*[2]. Hence, the baptism of blood always contains the implicit desire of baptism, such as it is understood by St. Thomas. Yet the catechumen who suffers martyrdom should possess an explicit desire. In a word, whilst baptism of desire operates solely *ex opere operantis*, the baptism of blood, operates *ex opere operato*, or more strictly *ex opere operato passive*[3]. Besides the acceptation of martyrdom, it presupposes, for the adult, at least imperfect contrition. The baptism of blood, like the baptism of water, remits all the temporal punishment; this remission cannot be said to be a necessary effect with the baptism of desire. In conclusion, it must be noted that neither the baptism of blood nor the baptism of desire imprint

---

1. *Sum. theol.*, III, q. LXIX, a. 1, 4.

2. H. BUONPENSIERE, *In III^am Partem Sum. theol.*, q. LXVI, a. 2, p. 98. (*Lithographed lectures.*)

3. *Ibid.*, p. 98 : *Nota quod causare gratiam ex opere operato contingit dupliciter, active nempe et passive. Causare gratiam ex opere operato active significat quod opus operatum per suam physicam efficientiam instrumentalem causet gratiam; quo modo efficientiæ gaudent sacramenta N. L... Causare gratiam ex opere operato passive, significat ipsum opus operatum esse dispositionem ex se sufficientem per quam homo infallibiter consequitur gratiam a Deo, quamvis illam non mereatur. Ita circumcisio antiquitus justificabat pueros Judæorum ex opere operato passive, quoniam independenter a quovis merito circumcisi, ipse mundabatur a peccato originali.*

upon the soul the baptismal character[1]. This is the exclusive and distinctive effect of the baptism of water[2].

---

1. *In IV Sent.*, dist. IV. q. III, a. 3, sol. III : *Baptismus aquæ efficaciam habet a passione Christi, in quantum eam sacramentaliter repræsentat; baptismus autem sanguinis passioni Christi conformat realiter, non sacramentali repræsentatione : et ideo, in his quæ sacramentalia sunt, baptismus sanguinis non supplet vicem baptismi aquæ, sicut est impressio characteris et hujusmodi; sed in eo quod est res tantum, supplet totaliter vicem baptismi aquæ, quando articulus necessitatis sacramentum excludit. Sicut enim in baptismo aquæ liberatur homo ab omni culpa præcedente et pœna, ita in baptismo sanguinis.*

2. The Council of Trent declares that baptism is necessary, ever since the Gospel was promulgated. Cf. Denz., 796. What are we to understand from this declaration?

As with every law, the evangelical precept which imposes baptism neither obliges, nor annuls the means of salvation already in use, before it was promulgated. The whole question becomes one of knowing what promulgation is required.

According to Suarez, baptism became obligatory for all, without distinction, when first the promulgation of the Gospel was a public fact — namely since the end of the third century.

This opinion is open to serious difficulties. Whilst, at the end of the third century, the promulgation of the Gospel may have been a public fact, still, the Gopel was unknown to a great number of people.

To this Suarez replied that the law of the necessity of baptism is an irritating law, that is, a law which annuls previous means of salvation. Now, it is the character of an irritating law to bind, even though many should remain ignorant of its existence. He then distinguishes between the promulgation of the Gospel and the notification of that promulgation. The promulgation of the Gospel was made early enough, but in many countries there can have been and can be many individuals or groups of individuals who as yet have not been notified of that promulgation. The transgression of the law is not imputed to these latter, although the law exists indeed for them. Cf. *De Legibus*, l. X, c. IV, n. 25.

This distinction of Suarez has been the principle of a new explanation. For an evangelical precept to become obligatory and binding in faith as in practice, the Gospel must be so preached in any particular region that all the inhabitants can, morally speaking, arrive to a knowledge of it. If it happen that some adults of this region fail to hear of the Gospel, without their own fault, these will continue to be negative infidels, that is, those who have not received the faith, because it has not been sufficiently presented tho them. The great majority will have known the Gospel or morally speaking will have been able to know it. Those who, having known it, or morally speaking, having been able to know it, and yet reject it, will become positive infidels, because they have rejected the faith when it was sufficiently presented to them. This is the

ARTICLE II.

Infant Baptism.

General idea. — We have already proven that baptism is necessary for all, without distinction, for adults as well as for infants. The necessity of baptism for infants in particular is, at least theoretically, determined. Since, however, it has been the point at issue in many controversies which deserve our consideration and discussion, we shall treat it somewhat at length, and try to determine more precisely the doctrine concerning the universal necessity of baptism.

The errors of the Protestants of the sixteenth century. — In maintaining the principle of justification by faith alone, Luther taught that baptism was necessary to salvation for adults as well as for infants. According to him, baptism is necessary for salvation, not indeed, in the sense that it is the cause of justification, but in the sense that it is the ordinary rite established by God to excite justifying faith. Both adults and children must, therefore, be baptized. Children must be baptized in order that God may awaken faith in them, just as He aroused it in the soul of John the Baptist. To be sure, infants have not the use of reason, but is it not precisely human reason which is the great obstacle to faith? However, where baptism is impossible, Luther held that the necessity of baptism of infants ceases. In this case the

---

teaching of Perrone who goes so far as to say that the Gospel is promulgated to an individual only when it has been directly presented to him : *Addendum est, ejusmodi [Evangelii] promulgationem relativam esse non solum quoad diversas gentes, verum etiam quoad individua, ut patet, cum lex evangelica non solum gentes, sed et individua singula obliget et obstringat; hinc, si aliquis inculpabiliter illam ignoret, ea minime obligatur.* Cf. *De Baptismo*, II, 125.

prayers of the parents for their children, and God's mercy suffice.

Zwingli taught the necessity of baptism for everybody. He was so much the more justified in requiring the baptism of infants that, for him, this rite was a mere exterior ceremony, a kind of circumcision of the New Law, effecting nothing else than the incorporation and enrolment of man into the new people of God.

Calvin shared Zwingli's point of view, with this difference, however, that, according to him, baptism did not incorporate the infant into the Church, but was a mere manifestation of that incorporation. The incorporation arose from the sole fact of being born of Christian parents.

Whilst Luther, Zwingli and Calvin acknowledged the law of the necessity of baptism, although they had weakened it considerably, a more radical reformer, Thomas Munzer, declared the baptism of infants to be null and void. Infants, he said, cannot make an act of justifying faith and hence are not able to receive baptism. Baptized infants are infidels as well as those who have not been baptized. They must be re-baptized when they reach manhood. The disciples of Thomas Munzer were called Anabaptists (ἀναβαπτίσειν : to re-baptize).

Erasmus who regarded the Protestant movement more from the view-point of an amateur than that of a convinced believer, declared himself in favor of the Anabaptists. He accepted their doctrine and modified it to suit himself. Infants must be baptized, he says, for baptism is necessary for the salvation of all. But the baptism which they receive does not definitely oblige them. When they have reached the age of reason, they should be instructed and asked if they desire to ratify the promises of their baptism. If they refuse, it will be better perhaps not to force them. Leave them to themselves until they return to the truth. No punishment should be inflicted on them, except the privation of the Eucharist and the other sacraments.

Protestantism condemned by the Council of Trent. — The Council of Trent teaches that baptism is necessary for salvation[1]; and, against Luther, Zwingli and Calvin, defines it as the instrumental cause of justification[2], and, therefore, the remedy of original sin[3], and the sacrament which confers the grace merited by Christ[4].

It is, therefore, necessary to baptize infants even though born of Christian parents, add the Fathers of the Council[5]. Infants who are born and die without baptism cannot have a share in eternal life[6].

The infant who has been baptized, declares the Council against the Anabaptists, even though incapable of making an act of faith, ought, nevertheless, to be counted among the faithful. No re-baptism will be necessary when it reaches the age of reason[7].

The Council declares also, against Erasmus that the infant who has been baptized is not afterwards free to ratify or undo the obligations assumed in its name[8]. No one, indeed, is free to ignore the commandment of God, when once the commandment has been promulgated. Moreover, no one can refuse obedience to the just law of his country, when once that law is enforced, and if there is any law whose promulgation can admit of no doubt, that law is the necessity of baptism for all.

---

1 DENZ., 861.

2. *Ibid.*, 799.

3. *Ibid.*, 792.

4. *Ibid.*, 790.

5. *Ibid.*, 791 : *Si quis parvulos recentes ab uteris matrum baptizandos negat, etiam si fuerint a baptizatis parentibus orti. . : A. S.*

6. *Ibid.*, 791.

7. *Ibid.*, 869.

8. *Ibid.*, 870. *Si quis dixerit, hujusmodi parvulos baptizatos, cum adoleverint, interrogandos esse, an ratum habere velint quod patrini, eorum nomine, dum baptizarentur, polliciti sunt, et, ubi se nolle responderint, suo esse arbitrio relinquendos ; nec alia interim pœna ad christianam vitam cogendos, nisi ut ab Eucharistiæ aliorumque sacramentorum perceptione arceantur, donec resipiscant : A. S.*

Infants who die without Baptism are excluded from the Beatific vision. — With the exception of the rather timid pretensions of the Pelagians, which St. Augustine had no difficulty in refuting [1], it can be said that Tradition has always unanimously affirmed that infants who die without baptism are excluded from heaven.

Agreeably to the teaching of the Fathers, St. Bonadventure taught that without baptism children cannot become acceptable to God, for they have no way of raising themselves to the supernatural life. He introduces a clause, however, which has called forth many commentaries : « Unless by a special privilege, God should justify them in an extra-sacramental manner, as he did for John the Baptist, while in the bosom of his mother[2]. » Thus, according to St. Bonaventure, the justification of an infant is only a possibility to be realized as an exception. Thus qualified such a doctrine could be taught indeed. It must be added, however, that a particular derogation from the baptismal law can be determined only when its existence will have been revealed by God.

Cardinal Cajetan expressed a far bolder opinion. According to him, the prayers of the parents could regularly and normally obtain the justification and salvation of their children when baptism is physically impossible, as, for example, it is for those children who are about to die in the mother's womb. The Fathers of the Council of Trent were shocked by this opinion and came very near condemning it, but abstained from such a course, however, and contented themselves with condemning the Protestant doctrine, according to which infants *already born* of Christian parents (*a baptizatis paren-*

---

1. Cf. *supra*, p. 86.

2. *In IV Sent.*, dist. IV, part. II, a. 1, q. 1 : *Privatus baptismo aquæ caret gratia Spiritus Sancti* [*parvulus*], *quia aliter ad gratiam non potest disponi quantum est de jure communi, nisi Deus faciat de privilegio speciali, sicut in sanctificatis in utero.*

tibus orti) could be justified without baptism[1]. Yet Pope Pius V ordered the former assertion to be erased from the works of the learned Cajetan[2].

Despite the disfavor aroused by this doctrine, Bianchi proceeded to resurrect it in a slightly altered form. In his opinion, infants who die without baptism, in their mother's womb, can be saved, provided the mother is careful to accept the death in the name of the child, as a proof of a desire to receive baptism[3]. This hypothesis is supported neither by Scripture nor Tradition, and is generally rejected by theologians.

Infants dying without baptism are exempt from suffering. The exclusion from the beatific vision is called the pain of damnation. Infants who die without baptism are subject to this pain, but the question is whether they are suffering any torture.

The Greek Fathers unanimously hold that infants who die without baptism, though deprived of the happiness of heaven, are yet exempt from the pains of hell[4]. This, too, was once the opinion of St. Augustine[5]. But during his controversy with the Pelagians, he was led to maintain that infants who die without baptism have no part, either in eternal life or in the kingdom of God, that there is no middle place between heaven and hell, that therefore, these infants are damned and, as such, suffer the pains of hell. The holy Doctor in no way determines what these pains are, merely

---

1. Pallavicini, *Histoire du concile de Trente*, l. IX, c. VIII.

2. Cf. J. Bellamy, *Sort des enfants morts sans baptême*, in *Dict. de Théol. cath.*, vol. II, pp. 364-366.

3. Bianchi (*Congreg. cleric. regul.*), *De remedio æternæ salutis pro parvulis in utero clausis, sine baptismate morientibus*, Venice, 1768.

4. Greg. Naz., *orat.* XL, *in sacr. bapt.*; *P. G.*, XXXVI, 389.

5. *De libero arbitrio*, l. III, CXXIII; *P. L.*, XXII, 1304.

asserting that they are the mildest of all those inflicted on the damned, *mitissima pœna*[1].

This opinion of St. Augustine seems to have been that of many Latin Fathers, in particular of St. Jerome[2], and of St. Gregory the Great[3]. Bossuet upheld it, and thus taught that infants who die without baptism do not exactly endure « the pain of fire », but, in a general way, undergo in hell some corporal punishment, for they are « in perpetual chastisement, damnation and tortures[4] ».

As early as the thirteenth century, however, theologians had unhesitatingly rejected the opinion of St. Augustine. Alexander of Hales taught that the lot of infants who die without baptism is not the fire of hell properly so called, but *darkness*, by which he meant the privation of the beatific vision[5]. Albert the Great also declared that exclusion from heaven constitutes the sole punishment for those children who die without baptism[6]. St. Thomas advances many proofs to show that infants dying without baptism are exempt from corporal punishment. In as much as actual sin, he writes, is at once a turning away from the sovereign good, *aversio ab incommutabili bono*, and an inordinate attach-

---

1. *Contra Julianum*, l. V, XI; *P. L.*, XLIV, 809. *De peccatorum meritis*, l. I, XVI; *P. L.*, XLIX, 120.

2. *Dial. adv. Pelag.*, l. III, 17; *P. L.*, XXIII, 587.

3. *Moral.*, l. IX, XXI; *P. L.*, LXXV, 877.

4. *Defense de la Tradition*, l. V, II. Some have not failed to support this opinion by referring to the profession of faith of the Council of Florence where it is said that all those who die in a state of mortal sin, or even only original sin, go into hell, where they are, however, subjected to unequal punishment. *Illorum autem animas, qui in mortali peccato vel cum solo originali decedunt, mox in infernum descendere, pœnis tamen disparibus puniendas.* DENZ., 693. However, the expression *mox in infernum descendere*, here signifies only a *lower place in general*, as opposed to heaven. Moreover, the Fathers of the Council had no intention of pronouncing on the nature of the punishment of the damned. Their sole desire was to teach that those who did not go to heaven were punished by unequal pains.

5. *Summa*, part. II, q. CVI, m. IX.

6. *In IV Sent.*, dist., IV, a. 8.

ment to a perishable good, *conversio ad bonum commutabile,* it is just that there should be a twofold punishment, first, the loss of grace and the beatific vision, corresponding to the turning away from God; and secondly physical sufferings, corresponding to the inordinate attachment to creatures. Original sin, however, does not include any attachment to a perishable good. It simply separates the soul from God, in the sense that it deprives it of sanctifying grace; that is, of a strictly necessary means for the attainment of our supernatural end. Consequently, it merits no afflictive punishment, but only the privation of the sight of God [1].

This doctrine is to-day commonly admitted by all theologians. Indeed, upon request made by the Archbishop of Arles, relative to baptism, Pope Innocent III, in reply, called attention to the necessity of distinguishing between original sin, which is contracted without, and actual which is committed with, our personal consent. The Pope furthermore said that while the punishment for original sin is the privation of the vision of God, that of actual sin consists in the torments of hell [2]. This declaration of Pope Innocent III, according to a modern theologian, « is not only an indubitable witness to the belief of the Roman Church, but is, especially since its insertion in 1230, in the *Corpus juris,* or the official code of Pontifical laws, without doubt a formal and authentic teaching of the Roman See [3]. »

Do infants who die unbaptized enjoy a certain happiness? — All men, whether infants or adults, have but one

---

1. *Quaest. disp., De malo,* q. v, a. 2.

2. Denz., 410 : *Peccatum est duplex : originale scilicet et actuale : originale, quod absque consensu contrahitur, et actuale, quod committitur cum consensu. Originale igitur, quod sine consensu contrahitur, sine consensu per vim remittitur sacramenti; actuale vero, quod cum consensu contrahitur, sine consensu minime relaxatur... Pœna originalis peccati est carentia visionis Dei; actualis vero pœna peccati est gehennæ perpetuæ cruciatus.*

3. J. Didiot, *Morts sans baptême,* p. 23, Lille, 1896.

and the same end, of a supernatural order, namely, the possession of God by the beatific vision. Infants who die unbaptized fail then to obtain their end, and are consequently in an abnormal condition. However, the question may be asked whether they enjoy a happiness similar to that which man would have obtained after death, if he had been created in another economy, namely, in a state of pure nature.

According to Bellarmine, those infants who die without baptism experience a real sadness in beholding themselves deprived of the beatific vision[1]. St. Thomas, on the contrary, claims that these infants are happy. Though separated from God by the privation of supernatural goods, they are united to Him by the natural goods. They can enjoy God by natural knowledge and love. After the resurrection, the bodies of these infants will be impassible in the sense that they will be immune from all disorders, all sickness, all suffering[2]. It was the opinion of Suarez that infants dying without baptism love God above all things[3]. Lessius adds that although the knowledge which they have of God is mediate, yet it surpasses that which we can have in this world[4]. « Infants who die without baptism », writes a contemporary theologian, « have only natural faculties, natural

---

1. *De amissione peccati et statu peccati*, l. VI, VI.

2. *In II Sent.*, dist. XXX, q. II, a. 2, ad 5um; dist. XXXIII, q. II, a. 1, ad 5um.

3. *De peccatis et vitiis*, disp. IX, sect. VI.

4. *De perfect. divin.*, l. XII, XXII, n. 144 ff. Cardinal Sfondrati exaggerates when he says that « the gifts of personal innocence, and exemption from sin [which fall to the lot of children who die without baptism] are so great that these infants would prefer to be deprived of the glory of heaven than to commit a single sin; and every Christian ought to be of this mind. Hence there is no reason to grieve or be troubled because of these children. Rather should there be praise and thanks to God on their account ». *Nodus prædestinationis dissolutus*, p. 120, Rome, 1687. Thus we can understand Bossuet's severe criticism of Cardinal Sfondrati for taking it for granted that exemption from actual sin is more to be desired than the possession of heaven, and for calling such exemption personal innocence. *Epist. ad Innocentium* XII.

tendencies, and natural aspirations towards God. In Him indeed they have their life and light and joy and happiness, but all in the purely natural order and all through the shadowy medium of human thoughts, judgments, and meditations. They cling to him, incapable of ever being separated from Him, but there is a distance and a mighty chasm between Him and them. They are then in that state of perfection and of everlasting beatitude to which the entire human race would have been called by Providence, had it not been destined for higher things, by being raised to the supernatural order[1]. »

Deprived of the beatific vision, although exempt from torments, these children enjoy a very appreciable natural happiness. They are in a place commonly called Limbo. The Jansenists who, at the synod of Pistoia, regarded the existence of this place as a Pelagian fable, were condemned by Pope Pius VI in the bull *Auctorem fidei*[2].

ARTICLE III.

The dispositions required to receive Baptism.

The ordinary dispositions. — No condition of course is required of infants. They are validly and fruitfully baptized in the faith of the Church — *in fide Ecclesiæ* — who asks baptism for them. As regards adults, there is but one condition required for validity, namely, the intention or the wish

---

1. J. Didiot, *op. cit.*, pp. 67-68.

2. Denz., 1526 : *Doctrina, quæ velut fabulam pelagianam explodit locum illum inferorum (quem limbi puerorum nomine fideles passim designant), in quo animæ decedentium cum sola originali culpa, pœna damni citra pœnam ignis puniantur; perinde ac si hoc ipso, quod, qui pœnam ignis removent, inducerent locum illum et statum medium expertem culpæ et pœnæ inter regnum Dei et damnationem æternam, qualem fabulabantur pelagiani : — falsa, temeraria, in scholas catholicas injuriosa.*

to receive baptism [1]. Such intention need not be actual. A virtual intention or one that is merely habitual, that is, once expressed and never afterwards positively recalled, suffices [2]. Consequently, that adult can validly be baptized who, after having manifested the intention to receive baptism, loses the use of his reason. Since, moreover, the general desire of doing whatever is necessary to be saved contains the implicit desire of baptism, it is very probable that such a desire suffices. However, to a dying person who would have manifested such a desire, before the loss of consciousness, conditional baptism should be given.

But for the worthy and, therefore, fruitful, reception of baptism, the adult must believe not only the truths necessary by necessity of means, but also, wherever possible, the truths necessary by necessity of precept [3]. He must have, at least, imperfect contrition for his actual sins, which, of course, supposes hope and the beginning of the love of God [4]. Sacramental penance must not be required, for as the Council of Trent declares, no one can be judged by the Church, before being admitted into the Church by baptism [5]. Also, adds the same Council, the adult must have the intention of beginning a new life and of observing the commandments of God [6], in other words, he must have the intention of

---

1. Denz., 798.

2. Cf. A. Tanquerey, *Synopsis Theol. dogm., De Baptismo*, n. 51.

3. Denz., 411 : *Dormientes autem et amentes, si prius quam amentiam incurrerent aut dormirent, in contradictione persisterent : quia in eis intelligitur contradictionis propositum perdurare, etsi fuerint sic immersi, characterem non suscipiunt sacramenti; secus autem si prius cathechumeni extitissent et habuissent propositum baptizandi, unde tales in necessitatis articulo consuevit Ecclesia baptizare. Tunc ergo characterem sacramentalis imprimit operatio, cum obicem voluntatis contrariæ non invenit obsistentem.*

4. *Ibid.*, 798.

5. *Ibid.*, 895 : *Constat certe, baptismi ministrum judicem esse non oportere, cum Ecclesia in neminem judicium exerceat, qui non prius in ipsam per baptismi januam fuerit ingressus.*

6. *Ibid.*, 798 : *Dum proponunt suscipere baptismum, inchoare novam vitam et servare divina mandata.*

effectively undertaking the obligations of his baptism. It will hence be necessary, unless impossible, sufficiently to explain to the candidate the ten commandments[1].

The Baptism of heretics. — The Catholic Church has always recognized the validity of baptism administered by heretics, provided, of course, the minister, having and manifesting outwardly the intention of doing what Christians do, has performed the washing with water and pronounced this formula : « I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. » Hence, when a heretic wishes to enter the Catholic Church, no re-baptism is demanded on general principle.

The general rule drawn up by the Holy Office is as follows : An inquiry should be made concerning the baptism conferred by heretics, after which, if it is certain that baptism was validly conferred, only the abjuration should be exacted. If however the baptism is found to have been conferred invalidly, baptism should then be administered absolutely, that is, without condition. But if, after the inquiry a prudent doubt anent the validity of baptism remains, a

---

1. Before an adult is admitted to baptism he must fulfil certain conditions ; an instruction of the Congregation of the Propaganda, Oct. 18, 1883 (Cf. *Collectanea*, n. 594), sums up these conditions : « In ordinary cases, and, except in danger of death, the adult who presents himself for baptism should know the principal mysteries of the faith, the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, the Decalogue, the precepts of the Church, the effect of baptism, the acts of the theological virtues as well as their motives. He must be cautioned about the particular dangers to which his faith is exposed in the country where he lives. If, due to his past life, any amends are necessary, he must be told of these and be willing to make them. If in the society in which he moves, there be customs contrary to Christian morality, these he must detest, or show, by certain signs, that he has reformed his ways. Finally, let him be on probation as long as the Ordinary judges proper. » For this purpose, the adult should be invited to unbosom himself to a confessor, so as to receive appropriate advice, without, of course, any suggestion of the sacrament of penance, which can be given only to those who have been baptized. Cf. *Acta Sanctae Sedis*, t. XXV, p. 454.

conditional baptism[1] will be necessary, and care should be taken to express that condition[2], so that no one might be led to think that baptism can be given twice to the same person. The Holy Office adds that administering of conditional baptism should be made privately[3]. Relative to doubts concerning the validity of baptism, conferred by a heretic, the Holy Office declares that any suspicion whatsoever or a simple scruple will in no way constitute a serious doubt, or warrant the repetition of even conditional baptism[4].

Moreover, it decides that the intention to do what Christ willed, ought not to be supposed absent from the mind of even those heretical ministers who teach as a matter of course, or expressly declare at the very moment of administering the sacrament that baptism produces no effect in the soul[5]. To judge the validity of such baptisms, the Holy Office declares also that the use of a Ritual which prescribes the essential matter and form is of itself a presumption in favor of its validity[6].

To several repeated inquiries respecting the validity of the baptism conferred in such and such a Protestant sect, the Holy Office and the Congregation of the Propaganda have always replied according to the principle of this general ruling[7]. Among all these replies only one declares in a general manner the nullity of baptism on principle, that is baptism administered by the Quakers since the adherents of this sect admit no other baptism save that of the Holy Ghost, of which baptism with water was only a foreshadowing[8].

---

1. *Collectanea*, n. 660.
2. *Ibid.*, n. 648.
3. *Ibid.*, n. 660.
4. *Ibid.*, n. 650, 659.
5. *Acta Sanctae Sedis*, 1892-1893, t. XXV, p. 246.
6. *Collectanea*, n. 649.
7. These different replies have been gathered together by E. Mangenot, in *Dict. de Théol. cath.*, vol. II, pp. 337-341.
8. The Salvation Army also has rejected the rite of ablution with water.

The Baptism of the children of Jews or infidels. — The regulations of the Church relative to the baptism of the children of Jews or of infidels are those of Pope Benedict XIV[1].

Baptism conferred on children of Jews or infidels, against the wishes of their parents, is valid, but unlawful, except in certain cases. It is valid because all the elements of the sacrament are present, and, again, because no condition is imposed upon infants. In default of parents, as the common expression has it, the Church demands baptism for the infant. It is unlawful, however, because as long as they have not reached the age of reason, children are totally subject to their parents, according to the very dictates of natural law. Such parental rights would be violated, were the sacrament to be administered without permission of those to whose care these children are committed. Moreover, it would be dangerous to confer baptism on those children who, upon reaching the age of reason, would be tempted to abjure their faith. Yet, in certain definite cases, a baptism of this kind would be lawful. For example, if the child were in danger of death, or abandoned by his parents, or, in other words, deprived of all help and of all hope of being assisted by his own again; if the child is no longer within reach of parental authority[2].

---

1. Benedict XIV discussed this question in three letters, *Inter omnigenas* (1744); *Postremo mense* (1747); *Probe te meminisse* (1751). In these letters, he does not speak as a private theologian, but gives decisions and « teaches » as St. Liguori says. Cf. *Theologia moralis*, l. VI, *tract.* II, *De Baptismo et Confirmatione*, n. 126. See the commentary on these letters, by Ch. Rugh, in *Dict. de Théol. cath.*, vol. II, pp. 341-355.

2. Can that which has been said of the baptism of the children of infidels, without the permission of the parents, be applied to the children of bad Christians, heretics, schismatics, apostates? These parents have no right to refuse, for they continue to be members of the Church, even if they are deprived of the spiritual advantages common to the faithful members. Hence, the Church may, in spite of them, give baptism to their children. This assertion is admitted to-day by all Catholic theologians. However, on account of the civil laws, and

If it should happen that the children of Jews or infidels be baptized against the wishes of their parents, the person who confers the sacrament must be held responsible; for, to leave the newly-baptized child in the custody of parents hostile to the faith would be to expose it to the almost certain danger of apostasy. The Church should, on principle, remove the child to other surroundings. However, nearly everywhere the civil laws are opposed to this and, in wishing to avert the peril of apostasy a greater good would be impeded and a greater evil produced. Hence it is better to leave the child with its parents and to seek a means to insure its religious education within its family [1].

On the contrary, both Jewish and infidel parents can ask baptism for their children. Their desire should be granted, provided they are willing to remove any danger of perversion, by confiding the children to Christians. If the request of the parents be traceable to any superstition, before complying with their wishes, they must be instructed and set aright. A father who has been converted from Judaism or infidelity to the Christian faith could, even against the opposition of the Jewish or infidel mother, present his son for baptism. So also does the mother who has embraced the faith of Christ possess this privilege, even if the father, Jewish or infidel, be unwilling. A kindred right is accorded to a guardian. The paternal grandfather and the paternal grandmother as well, in exercise of this

---

prejudices, often this may not be done; or, it could not be done ordinarily, at least, without grave damage; for the evil caused would be greater than the good effects obtained. Hence the baptism of children of bad Christians, in spite of the wish of their parents is not always opportune. Indeed it would even be unlawful, if it were foreseen that the child would be placed in proximate danger of apostasy.

1. In 1858, Edgar Mortara, the son of a Jew of Bologna, who, while in danger of death, had been baptized by a Catholic servant maid, was subjected to the rule of Benedict XIV. The Pontifical government took the child away from its parents that it might be brought up a Christian.

privilege, may legitimately present their grandson for baptism, in spite of the fact that the father or mother, or both, remain Jews or infidels and unwilling.

The Baptism of adult infidels. — Following the teaching of Benedict XIV, the children of Jews or infidels must not be baptized against the wishes of their parents, if they have not reached a proper age and then only if they consent. The proper age is ordinarly the completion of the seventh year. The use of violence to oblige Jews or infidels to receive baptism is forbidden. Moreover, the sacrament conferred on an adult who has refused it openly and freely, is null. If an adult approached the sacrament without intending to receive it, but with a becoming outward attitude, in the words of theology, with a mere « external intention », baptism would be doubtful.

CHAPTER VI.

THE LITURGY OF BAPTISM.

Our liturgy of baptism has four parts : the *admission* to baptism, the *preparation* for baptism, the *administration* of baptism and the *complement* of baptism.

The Admission to Baptism. — The first part of the liturgy of baptism takes place *ad limen Ecclesiae* — at the door of the Church. This is to indicate that just as baptism opens the door of the kingdom of God, so it is the condition which must be fulfilled, in order to enter into the earthly temple of the Lord.

In the first place, the child is given a name which will stamp him as a new man regenerated by grace. Then, the candidate for baptism, or rather they who represent him, are questioned as to what they ask of the Church. They reply that they come to ask the faith which consists in the observance of the twofold precept of the love of God and of the neighbour.

The minister then performs the first exorcism by lightly breathing on the child, thereby showing that the demon can be put to flight only by the breath of God, that is, by the Holy Ghost. From this moment, by the action of the grace of the Holy Ghost, the candidate belongs to the Church. As a sign of this membership, the minister marks him on the forehead with the sign of the cross : then, for the first time, he prays

for him in the name of the Church, using two distinct prayers. The priest next gives the candidate the first sacramental, that of salt which symbolizes wisdom, viz., the knowledge and love of divine things that begets dislike for the things of this world. The effect of this sacramental is to bring peace to the soul. The minister addresses a new prayer to God for the candidate, performs a new exorcism, traces on his forehead another sign of the cross, and again addresses a prayer to God. The candidate is then admitted to baptism and the priest, placing the stole upon his head, leads him into the church [1].

The Preparation for Baptism. — The procession advances toward the baptismal font, while the minister and the sponsors recite, in a loud voice, the *Credo* and the *Pater*. Then before proceeding to administer the sacrament itself, the priest begins a new set of ceremonies. He first performs an exorcism, which is concluded by the opening of the ears and nostrils of the candidate, to symbolize the practical understanding of and taste for heavenly things, which he must strive to preserve, despite the attacks of the devil. This rite is followed by the solemn renouncement of Satan: then the candi-

1. The ceremonies of admission to the sacrament of baptism are the same as those used in the admission of adults to the catechumenate. Except in cases of necessity, as already remarked, the primitive Church administered baptism only to adults and in order to furnish candidates with the necessary preliminary religious instruction and moral formation, she prescribed for them a time of probation called the catechumenate. But even before his admission to the catechumenate, the candidate was put to a first test. He was entrusted to the care of a catechist whose duty it was to initiate him in the knowledge and observance of the commandments of God, and it is only when the bishop and the catechist judged the initiation to have been sufficient that the candidate was admitted to the catechumenate. The ceremony opened with an examination, in which the candidate was questioned as to the object of his desire. The bishop then performed three acts: 1. breathing on the candidate, he exorcised him; 2. traced on his forehead the sign of the cross; 3. presented him with salt to signify his break with sin. Cf. L. Duchesne, *Christian Worship*, ch. IX, *Christian initiation*.

date is anointed with the oil of the catechumens, in order to be strengthened against the attacks of the devil.

The preparation for baptism, or the penitential part of the rite, is over, and the priest, laying aside the purple stole puts on the white one, in view of the ceremony of baptismal regeneration which is about to take place [1].

The Administration of Baptism. — This ceremony opens with the three following questions : « Do you believe in

---

1. The ceremonies of preparation for baptism recall those which the bishop formerly went through with the catechumens. These were allowed to enter the church and took their place in those Christian gatherings in which the Scriptures were read and explained. They also assisted at the first part of Mass (the Mass of the Catechumens), during which these two religious exercises the more often took place, and were known as *auditores*. Once sufficiently instructed in the Christian truths and formed to the practice of virtue, they could ask to receive baptism. Their names were then inscribed on the church registers and from *auditores* they became *competentes*. Out of this practice arose the custom of bestowing a name upon the candidate for baptism. The *competentes* then prepared for baptism by more fervent prayer and continual fasting: even to-day, the adult who is about to receive baptism is requested to remain fasting. The Church, meanwhile, convoked the catechumens to gatherings called *scrutinia* in which their progress was ascertained and the faithful were invited to make such remarks as they deemed necessary. In these assemblies, the bishop submitted the *competentes* to new examinations which consisted in formulas accompanied by signs of the cross, and ended with the imposition of the holy sign itself on the forehead of the catechumens. The exorcism which, in our present-day liturgy, follows the giving of salt, must be a vestige of the exorcisms connected with the catechumenate. In these gatherings, the instruction of the catechumens was completed by the official initiation in the Gospel, the Creed and the Our Father. Hence in our own liturgy, the custom of reciting the Creed and the Our Father by the minister and the baptized person or by his godfather and godmother. In the last *scrutinium* — that of Holy Saturday — was pronounced the last and the most solemn exorcism. It was followed by the *mysterium apertionis*, the solemn renouncement to Satan, and the anointing with the oil of the catechumens. The liturgy of to-day has preserved this last exorcism as well as the three rites that followed; the oil used in anointing is still called the oil of the catechumens. Cf. Dom Chardon, *Histoire du sacrement de Baptême*, sect. I, 1re partie, *Du catéchuménat*, ch. I-IX. — J. Corblet, *Histoire du Baptême*, t. I, I, IX. *De la préparation au Baptême*. — L. Duchesne, *op. cit.*, pp. 298-308. — P. de Puniet, *Le Catéchuménat*, in *Dict. d'Arch. chrét. et de Lit.*, vol. II, pp. 2579-2621.

God? » « Do you believe in Jesus Christ? » « Do you believe in the Holy Ghost? » To each of which the adult, or the godparents answer in the name of the child, « I believe ». This custom, we have seen, is very ancient, and is found mentioned in all the sacramentaries[1].

The candidate is then asked if he wishes to be baptized. Baptism is administered, the priest pouring the baptismal water on the head of the person to be baptized, whilst pronouncing the sacramental words.

The Complement to Baptism. — The baptismal act properly so called is followed by three ceremonies, the symbolism of which is most lofty. The priest, in the first place, makes, with the holy Chrism an unction in the form of a cross on the crown of the head of the newly baptized. This is to signify that he has received the unction of the Holy Ghost, and is henceforth the adopted son of God. After his baptism, the catechumen was formerly received, clothed in a white garment which he wore during eight days, in sign of his recovered innocence. This rite has also been preserved, after a fashion, in our liturgy. Finally, the priest places in the hands of the sponsors a wax candle which they hold over the child. In the meantime, he recites a prayer in which he explains the meaning of this last rite. The newly baptized, he says, although not in so many words, must henceforth live as a child of light, observing the commandments of God[2].

A few Regulations relative to the liturgy of Baptism. — 1. There is a grave obligation on the minister of solemn baptism to give the sacrament only to a subject provided with, at

---

1. Cf. *supra*, pp. 48-49.

2. The anointing with holy Chrism which follows upon baptism is the one formerly made by the priest before presenting the newly-made Christian for confirmation. Nowadays, confirmation being not administered immediately after baptism, the ceremony ends with an appropriate prayer whilst a lighted candle is placed in the candidate's hand.

least, a godfather, or a godmother. According to the most current practice, the candidate for baptism is accompanied by a godfather and a godmother. It is forbidden to accept several godfathers or godmothers, properly so called, so as not to multiply the diriment impediments of spiritual parenthood. The necessary conditions to be a godfather or a godmother, in the canonical sense of the term, are : to have the use of reason, to be baptized, to be designated by the parents or parish-priest; at least to touch the child when the water is being poured on its head; to have the intention of filling the office of godfather or godmother. Heretics and schismatics, therefore, cannot be chosen for this office, neither are they eligible who have been excommunicated, or whose honor has been sullied by the *infamia juris*. Parents cannot stand as sponsors for their child, nor can a wife for her husband, and vice versa.

Besides these conditions for validity, there are certain conditions for lawfulness. Godparents must be at least fourteen years of age, and know the elementary truths of faith. They must not have been excommunicated for a notorious offence, nor branded by the *infamia juris*. The office of godparents cannot be held by religious of either sex, nor by clerks in sacred orders[1].

In default of the parents, the godparents are bound to instruct the child in the truths and precepts of the Christian doctrine. They must also come forth as witnesses, if, at any subsequent date, the existence or the validity of the child's baptism is called into question. The absence of the sponsors chosen by the parents is not a sufficient motive for delaying the baptism of newly-born children. In such cases, proxies must be delegated, who will represent them at the ceremony of baptism, although, in this case, the canonical obligation attached by the Church to the title of

1. *Cod. J. C.*, Can. 765-766.

godparents will remain wholly with the sponsors chosen by the parents[1].

2. The general rule is that infants must be brought to the church a few days after their birth and baptized at the baptismal font, with all the ceremonies and prayers indicated by the Roman Ritual; a good reason will excuse from this rule. A decree of the Sacred Congregation of the Sacraments, of December 23, 1912, decides that if, for reason of health, or for any other just motive, the infant could not be brought to the church, the bishop may allow a priest to confer solemn baptism with all the rites and prayers which precede and follow it, at the child's home[2].

3. Private baptism is permitted, nay even commanded when the child is in danger of death. Concerning the lawfulness of administering private baptism outside the case of danger of death, this is what may be said. It is certain that the decree of December 23, 1912, cited above, prohibits, or at least orders to reduce to the least possible number of times, the practice of baptizing privately, except in danger of death. In these few exceptional cases private baptism can be administered by a priest only, and with the permission of the bishop. Moreover, the bishop cannot allow it unless on the one hand there is a just and reasonable motive to administer this baptism at the child's home, and on the other, local reasons prevent the administration of solemn baptism.

4. If the person who administers private baptism is the priest, he must, unless the child is dying, perform, after the pouring of the water the post-baptismal rites, i. e., the anointing with holy chrism, the giving of the linen and the wax candle. The ante-baptismal ceremonies, or those which

---

1. In former days, when the catechumenate was still in force, an adult who wished to receive baptism was first obliged to seek a Christian who would present him to the bishop, and stand as guarantee of his good dispositions. From this custom developed the institution of godparents. Cf. J. Corblet, *op. cit.*, t. I, p. 446.

2. Cf. *Act. Apost. Sed.*, December 30, 1912.

precede the pouring of the water should be supplied later on at the church.

Private baptism given by a layman, must comprise only the essential rite of baptism; the ceremonies which precede and follow baptism are to be supplied afterwards at the church by the priest.

5. Solemn baptism of heretics, as also that of adults, is the object of a special regulation, provided for by the statutes of each diocese. Baptism of heretics must be preceded by the ceremony of the abjuration of their errors.

II.

CONFIRMATION.

The life of grace every true follower of Christ must lead is a life of perpetual warfare.

As soon, indeed, as he has reached the age of reason, the Christian is placed in a position which calls for a courageous profession of his faith : he has to brave the scornful, oftentimes the brutal or sarcastic unbelief of the irreligious, tread under foot that human respect and fear which the mighty ones of this world can inspire, overcome the weaknesses of his own native timidity and his own indolence to acquire knowledge ; in a word, he has to carry on a perpetual warfare.

This is why Christ was not content with instituting the sacrament of baptism, through which we are born into the life of grace, but also established another sacrament which causes this life to grow within us. A new strength is thus imparted to our souls that we may fight courageously, like soldiers under their commander, and openly proclaim our faith. Such is the purpose of the sacrament of Confirmation, called by this name on account of its special efficacy. It is defined : A Sacrament of the New Law, instituted by Our Lord, which enlists the Christian in the spiritual army of Christ, and strengthens him, by a special grace, to profess courageously before the world the faith of his baptism, in

classic words, *Sacramentum Novae Legis, a Christo institutum, per quod homo baptizatus deputatur ad spiritualem Christi militiam, et accipit robur ad audacter confitendum in mundo fidem Christi crucifixi, qui, ut Apostolus ait, Judaeis est scandalum, Gentibus autem stultitia.*

These Studies on Confirmation are divided into six chapters :

Chapter I. — *The Institution of Confirmation.*

Chapter II. — *The Rite of Confirmation.*

Chapter III. — *The Effects of Confirmation.*

Chapter IV. — *The Minister of Confirmation.*

Chapter V. — *The Recipient of Confirmation.*

Chapter VI. — *The Liturgy of Confirmation.*

CHAPTER I.

THE INSTITUTION OF CONFIRMATION.

It is extremely important in the beginning to state exactly the subject of our study.

Protestant errors concerning the divine origin of the sacrament of confirmation all arise from ignorance of the subject. We shall naturally be led, in the course of these studies, to expose these errors, and also to recall the condemnatory formulas issued by the Council of Trent. Once these points have been cleared up, we shall have no difficulty in discovering the proofs of the divine institution of confirmation, both in the New Testament, and in Patristic Tradition. Scholastic Theologians have especially studied the manner in which this sacrament was instituted. We shall faithfully adhere to their various explanations and discuss them in their proper place.

The Question. — If justification consist in the coming of the Holy Ghost into our souls to live in them and transform them into a fit dwelling-place for the Divinity, it is evident that all the sacraments indiscriminately produce or strengthen in us the presence of the Divine Spirit, and that they produce or develop in us not only the virtues, but also the gifts themselves.

The Holy Spirit, however, can be received for many different purposes. In other words, by His coming into our souls, the Holy Ghost can produce effects of grace which

are not necessarily contained in ordinary grace, nor in this or that sacramental grace. Such was the coming of the Holy Ghost to the Apostles on the day of Pentecost. Gathered together in the upper-room they witnessed tongues of fire separating and resting upon the head of each of them. They were filled with the Holy Ghost from this time and began to preach the Gospel to the enemies of the Christian name, with an indomitable courage, to reproach the Jews for their crime of deicide, and to bear witness to the resurrection of Christ.

On the day of Pentecost, therefore, the Apostles received the Holy Ghost under a visible symbol, indeed, yet not through the intermediary of a sacrament. The question, then, is this : Is there any special sacrament, distinct from baptism, and conferring a grace of the same nature as that given to the Apostles on Pentecost day ; a grace called the plenitude of the Holy Spirit, because it completes the effect of baptism, making an adult out of every Christian child, and equipping him for warfare against the enemies of his faith?

Before further inquiry, let us remark that if, in the beginning, the gift of the Holy Spirit was accompanied by charisms, it is not on account of these charisms that the Holy Ghost may be said to be given or received [1]. These

---

1. No one can deny, that during the period covered by the narrative of the Acts of the Apostles, this coming of the Holy Spirit was usually accompanied by miraculous manifestations and prodigies. Often enough the subject who received the Holy Ghost was internally admonished or instructed, spurred on by what we might term an unmistakable instinct, and endowed with the most extraordinary knowledge, whereby he gazed into the future and prophesied. *Acts,* VIII, 29 ; X, 19 ; XI, 28. Or he was heard in many dialects at the same time, *Acts,* II, 8 ; spoke divers tongues, *Acts,* II, 4 ; X, 46 ; XIX, 6 ; had visions, *Acts,* II, 17 ; VII, 55 ; performed miracles, *Acts,* IV, 30, 31 ; VI, 5-8 ; XIII, 9-11 ; or was benefited by miracles that were performed, *Acts,* IX, 17 ; fought successfully against the evil spirits, VIII, 7. At times, more curious and more impressive phenomena took place : extraordinary apparitions, *Acts,* II, 3 ; sudden transfer from one place to another, *Acts,* VIII, 39 ; sound of mighty wind, a *Acts,* II, 2 ; shaking of the foundations of houses,

favors indeed are gifts granted to some of the faithful, not for their own sanctification, but for *the good of the Church.*

Sometimes they may even be granted to sinners, although their souls are not transformed for this reason into temples of the Holy Ghost. Frequent enough in the beginning of the Church, charisms became afterwards more and more rare, although they never completely disappeared. They should, therefore, not be dealt with in a treatise on the sacrament of confirmation [1].

Protestant errors. — By his theory of justification by faith alone, Luther should logically have been led to reject all the sacraments. He thought it wise, however, to proceed slowly. In his sermon on the New Testament, delivered in 1520, he still admits seven sacraments, but the same year, in his *Prelude to the Captivity of Babylon,* he recognized only three, baptism, penance and the Eucharist. He attacked, in a particular manner, the sacrament of confirmation. « Without a doubt », he writes, « it is true that the Apostles imposed hands on the faithful, in order to confer upon them the gifts of the Spirit, but the graces attached to that rite were charisms, or extraordinary graces which the Church has since forgotten. » « If bishops », he continues, « have carefully preserved the right to perform a somewhat similar ceremony, it is only in order to enhance, by the pomp of a purely external function, the prestige of their ministry, to surround themselves with an atmosphere of importance and feigned utility. » These words suffice to prove that Luther was mistaken concerning the precise object of the sacrament of confirmation. He was willing, however, to preserve the

---

Acts, IV, 31. In short, when the Spirit was communicated, He seemed to delight in giving some external sign of His presence. These things were seen or heard, *Acts*, II, 32-33. Cf. Ch. Ruch, *La confirmation dans la Sainte Ecriture,* in *Dict. de Théol. cath.*, art. *Confirmation*, vol. III, p. 986-7.

1. Cf. L. Billot, *De Confirmatione*, th. XXXI.

practice of such a rite, provided it be rid of all useless and superstitious traditions, opposed as they were to the Holy Scriptures, and, above all, provided it be stripped of all sacramental value. The practice of confirmation understood in this way, was indeed continued, by the first reformers. To-day, in the Lutheran Church, confirmation is always administered. It is a religious ceremony by which persons who were baptized in their infancy, renew and confirm in presence of the assembled Church, the profession of faith which was made, and the promises taken in their name by their parents or their sponsors. This solemnity is preceded by an examination bearing on Christian doctrine, before a jury made up of the pastors and, in most cases, at least of the members of the Consistory. The completion of the recipient's fourteenth year is generally demanded before confirmation is administered. Only pastors duly ordained and instituted can give confirmation, that is, confirm those who have been baptized, in their Christian vocation, and pronounce their solemn and definitive admission into the ranks of the members of the Church[1].

It was with far less circumspection than Luther that Calvin attacked the Catholic doctrine of confirmation. The sacramental effects of confirmation, according to him, are identical with those of baptism and it is a sacrilege to desire their practical disconnection[2]. In the beginning, confirmation was a mere blessing, pronounced over children who, having reached the age of discretion, were summoned to a special ceremony, in order to confirm the faith of their

---

1. Cf. R. Cuvier, *La Confirmation*, Paris, 1842.

2. *Institution Chrétienne*, Bk VI., ch. xix, par. 8, transl. by John Allen: Let us examine still more closely how many monsters are fostered by this oil. The dispensers of it say that the Holy Spirit is given, in baptism for innocence, in confirmation for an increase of grace; that in baptism we are regenerated to life, and that by confirmation we are armed for warfare; and they have so far lost all shame, as to deny that baptism can be perfect without confirmation. What perversity!

baptism[1]. Such a ceremony, adds Calvin, offers precious advantages and should therefore be maintained in the Reformed Church[2].

The Condemnation issued by The Council of Trent. — After the sixth session, the Fathers of the Council broached the subject of the sacraments in general, and of baptism and confirmation in particular. In the second general meeting, Protestant errors concerning matters that were to be decided in the seventh session were brought under discussion. Protestants were found to err in four points concerning the sacrament of confirmation : 1) They claimed that it was not a sacrament. 2) That it was instituted by the Fathers and had not the promises of the grace of God. 3) That it was a vain ceremony, and in former times a mere catechesis in which those who approached adolescence, gave an account of their faith before the Church. 4) That the minister of confirmation was not the bishop alone, but also any priest.

These errors were discussed by the theologians in eight particular meetings, then by the Fathers of the Council in twelve general meetings. Three canons were drawn up and submitted to the Fathers of the Council, in a new general meeting, and the received text was published in solemn session, March 3, 1547. The first canon defined the sacramentality of confirmation against the theories of Luther and Calvin[3].

---

1. Cf. P. Bernard, *La Confirmation chez les protestants,* in the *Dict. de Théol. cath.*, art. *Confirmation*, vol. III, pp. 1082-1088.

2. Anglicans recognize the fact that confirmation is an external sign of a special grace. But since, they say, its institution by Christ is not certain, and since it is not necessary for salvation, it should be preserved apart from the other sacraments. Cf. L. Maréchal, *La Confirmation dans l'Église anglicane*, in the *Dict. de Théol. cath.*, art. *Confirmation*, vol. III, pp. 1079-1082.

3. Denz., 871 : *Si quis dixerit confirmationem baptizatorum otiosam ceremoniam esse, et non potius verum et proprium sacramentum; aut olim nihil aliud fuisse quam catechesim quamdam, qua adolescentiae proximi, fidei suæ rationem coram Ecclesia exponebant : A. S.*

The second declared that the anointing with holy chrism was part of the sacrament, and that it had a special efficacy which came from the Holy Gost[1]. The third canon — which we will consider later — affirmed that the bishop alone is the ordinary minister of confirmation. With regard to the divine institution of confirmation, the Fathers of the Council thought it had been sufficiently settled by the first canon on the sacraments in general [2].

Holy Scripture. — It is recorded in the Acts of the Apostles that the Samaritans were attentive to Simon the Magician because, for a long time, he had bewitched them with his magical practices. But when Philip announced to them the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they believed, and both men and women were baptized. The Spirit of God, however, had not yet descended upon them. The Apostles, continues the narrative, « having heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John, who, when they were come, prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Ghost. For he was not as yet come upon any of them, but they were only baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then, Peter and John laid their hands on them and they received the Holy Ghost[3] ».

Later, St. Paul intervened in quite similar circumstances. « Paul having passed through the upper coast came to Ephesus, and found certain disciples. And he said to them : « Have you received the Holy Ghost, since ye believed? » But they said to him : « We have not so much as heard whether

---

1. *Ibid.*, 872 : *Si quis dixerit, injurios esse Spiritui Sancto eos, qui sacro confirmationis chrismati virtutem aliquam tribuunt : A. S.* Cf. A. Theiner, *Acta genuina Concilii Tridentini*, t. I, post. sess VI.

2. The first canon on the sacraments in general defined that all the sacraments of the New Law were instituted by Our Lord. Cf. Denz., 844.

3. *Acts*, viii, 14-17.

there be a Holy Ghost. » And he said : « In what, then, were you baptized? » Who said : « In John's baptism. » Then Paul said : « John baptized the people with the baptism of penance, saying that they should believe in him who was to come after him, that is to say, in Jesus. » Having heard these things they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had imposed his hands on them, the Holy Ghost came upon them and they spoke with tongues and prophesied. And all the men were about twelve[1] ». According to the author of the Acts of the Apostles, therefore, Peter and John and Paul gave the Holy Ghost. The special grace granted to the Samaritans and to the Ephesians was also given to the centurion Cornelius and his family. « While Peter was yet speaking », we read in the Acts, « Cornelius, the centurion, and his intimate friends — all of them Gentiles — received the Holy Ghost and spoke in tongues, so that Peter cried out : « Can any man forbid water that these men should not be baptized who have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?[2] » The favor accorded to the Samaritans and Ephesians was not then a grace reserved to a certain few; it was a gift that could be communicated to all those who believed in the Messias, who were penitent, and, the more often at least, had already received baptism.

What is the nature of this gift? It is a grace distinct from that which is given in baptism, as is well illustrated in the history of the conversion of the Samaritans. They had already been baptized by Philip the deacon, but something was lacking which he could not give them, and baptism called for it as its indispensable complement. Peter and John came on purpose from Jerusalem to impose hands on the Samaritans, and give them the Holy Ghost. Here, minister, ceremonies and effects all are different. In the same way Paul instructs the twelve disciples at Ephesus.

---

1. *Acts*, XIX, 1-7.
2. *Acts*, X, 44-46.

They are then baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus and baptism, without a doubt, produced its effect. Paul then imposes hands and confers the Holy Ghost. The distinction between the two effects is clearly marked. Cornelius and his family receive the gift of the Holy Ghost before their baptism, whilst Peter was speaking. Hence the gift of the Holy Ghost is a grace distinct from that given by baptism. Nevertheless the two favors logically call for each other and, as a rule, follow each other in order of time. Christian initiation is incomplete until the gift of the Holy Ghost has been received. This does not mean that baptism has not already conferred the Holy Ghost, but simply that it has not produced that special gift which the neophyte claims in order to become a perfect Christian.

In the early years of the Church, the imparting of the Holy Ghost was very often accompanied by charisms. The Ephesians and undoubtedly the Samaritans also received the gifts of tongues and prophecy, as did Cornelius and his family. This, however, was only an external sign which marked the coming of the Holy Ghost. The gift of the Holy Ghost consists, above all, in the communication of a particular grace of strength which enables the newly baptized to bear witness to Christ, without fear, or human respect. According to the Acts, not only the twelve disciples of the Savior were filled with the Holy Ghost, but also the principal members of the early Church, Stephen, Philip, Cornelius and Paul. These men announced the word of God with a courage equal to that of the Apostles themselves. Stephen gave testimony with a force that could not be resisted[1]. Philip preached Christ with the greatest zeal[2]. Cornelius glorified God[3], and Paul was chosen to carry the name of

1. *Acts*, VI, 10.
2. *Ibid.*, VIII.
3. *Ibid.*, X, 46.

Jesus before the Gentiles[1]. Hence the Holy Ghost is given to strengthen our souls and render us worthy witnesses before men, of God and His Son, Jesus Christ. This is the special character of the gift of the Holy Ghost.

We must note, in addition, that, except in most solemn and extraordinary cases, in which God intervenes directly, it is through intermediaries that the Holy Spirit is given to men. Neither can any one whatsoever bestow the Holy Ghost. To the Apostles is reserved that power. Philip the deacon was filled with the Holy Ghost at Samaria, yet he did not impose hands, and the narrative makes it clear that if he refrained from this act, it was because he had not the power[2].

In the exceptional cases spoken of, in which the direct action of God was accompanied by some prodigy, the Holy Ghost descended without any rite having been performed. Usually, however, the Holy Ghost was communicated through the imposition of hands and this action seems to possess a real efficacy. With regard to the question whether any formula was pronounced to invest the rite with efficacy, it can be stated that although we read in the *Acts*[3] that

---

1. *Acts*, IX, 15.

2. It is sometimes asserted that Ananias also gave the Holy Ghost, through the imposition of hands (Cf. *Acts*, IX, 17-19). This remains to be proven. In fact, we do not know why the disciple sent to Paul, imposed hands upon him.

3. In our effort to establish the existence of confirmation in the Apostolic times, we have made use of texts taken exclusively from the *Acts* of the Apostles. This does not mean that no other texts can be adduced. We read, for instance, in the Epistle to Titus the statement of the Apostle St. Paul that « according to His mercy (God) has saved us by the laver of regeneration, and renovation of the Holy Spirit ». *Titus*, III, 5. Is there not, in this text, an allusion to two different rites, the first alone, — that of the washing of the feet — being mentioned, and the second — that of the imposition of hands — remaining understood? The Epistle to the Hebrews is even more explicit. The author is writing to an ancient Christian community, and complains that the recipients of his letter who should be « full grown men », « masters capable of understanding the doctrine of justice », have become as little children to such an extent that they need to learn again « the first elements of the word of God » — the ele-

Peter and John prayed before imposing hands on the Samaritans, it is not evident whether this was done to draw down the Holy Ghost, or to impart Him to men. To sum up, then, the texts contained in the *Acts*[1] prove sufficiently that during the first period of the Apostolic ministry, the rite of the imposition of hands was in use, both in Palestine and at Ephesus. As a general rule, it was performed only over those who had been baptized. It was reserved exclusively to the Apostles. Through it, the Spirit of God was imparted to the newly baptized christians and all were called to receive it, provided they brought to its reception certain dispositions. Finally, it gave them the strength to bear witness to Christ. Are not all these the very characteristic features of the sacrament of confirmation[1]?

We have yet, it is true, to establish the divine institution of this rite. Most theologians simply have recourse to a reasoning, and their argument may be formulated as follows: The *Acts*, they say, certainly point to the existence of a rite,

---

mentary teaching about Christ. Undoubtedly it is question here of the truths usually taught to catechumens and neophytes. The author does not think it necessary to give a lengthy exposition of these « fundamental » notions, because the recipients of his epistle are well able to recall them; he merely enumerates some of these fundamental doctrines. « Wherefore leaving the word of the beginning of Christ », he says, « let us go on to things more perfect, not laying again the foundation of penance from dead works, and of faith towards God, of the doctrine of baptism and imposition of hands, and of the resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment. *Heb.*, v, 11; vi, 1-2. What is this imposition of hands: this rite so intimately connected with baptism, and yet not confounded with it? No mistake is possible here: the imposition of hands alluded to, is the same as the one described in the Acts of the Apostles. Cf. Ch. Rugh, *loc. cit.*, p. 1006.

1. We should note in this connection the words of a theologian whom no one will accuse of partiality towards the Catholic dogma. « At the time when the author of the *Acts* writes, the power to give the Spirit by the imposition of hands was considered a privilege reserved to certain selected persons... And as the gift of the Spirit was looked upon as the complement of baptism, we certainly have there the beginning of the future *sacramentum confirmationis*. » Cf. H. G. Holtzmann, *Lehrbuch der neutestamentlichen Theologie*, t. I, p. 382, Friburg and Leipzig. 1897.

signifying and producing a special grace. Now a rite of this kind could not have been invented by the Apostles, for they were too well informed as to the meaning of Our Lord's words, and had too much respect for His recommendations, to invent such a rite. Therefore Jesus Himself is the sole author of this rite[1]. Indeed, we must confess that there is not a single passage in the Gospels where Jesus speaks in a formal manner of the sacrament of confirmation[2]. But is it not the function of Tradition to instruct us concerning such dogmatic facts as are not found in the Scriptures?

There is no harm, however, in our searching the Scriptures to see whether or not they contain any reference to the divine institution of confirmation. Indeed we find that, one day, as Jesus was speaking to the twelve Apostles, He said to them : « You shall be witnesses unto me in Judea. Samaria and even to the uttermost part of the earth : you shall receive the power of the Spirit[3]. » At the Last Supper He promised them the Spirit, who would teach them all truth[4]. Again, He assured the pilgrims of Emmaus, that He would send them the promised gift, that they might have the strength to stand as witnesses of His passion and resurrection[5]. Finally, in another place, He promised the same Spirit « to them that ask Him[6] ». Now the Spirit promised by the Master on these different occasions was not the Spirit who was to create the disciple, or infuse a new life into the soul, or remit sin, but the Spirit who was to give courage and strength to render testimony to Christ, without fear or human respect, in all circumstances. What Christ promised, after all was a spiritual effect distinct from the one to be produced by baptism.

---

1. Cf. P. de Augustinis, *De re sacramentaria*, t. I, p. 419, Rome, 1887.

2. Cf. P. Schanz, *Die Lehre von den heiligen Sacramenten der Katholischen Kirche*, p. 283, Freiburg, 1891.

3. *Acts*, I, 8.

4. Jn., XVI, 13.

5. Lk., XXIV, 46-49.

6. Lk., XI, 13.

Now, we can maintain that, in His promise, Our Lord ratified, in advance, the imparting of the Spirit under its various forms, and consequently confirmation. It was not necessary that He should have spoken before His death of the imposition of hands, nor even that He should have alluded to it. It sufficed that, after His departure from their midst, the Apostles should be instructed through the charisms, or other manifestations, that at the moment this action was accomplished the promise of Jesus was being fulfilled! Christ glorified would thus be completing the work of the Christ of history, and we would have an institution in two distincts acts : the promise of the gift and the ratification of the rite[1].

But perhaps we must see in these texts of the promise and in the first communications of the Holy Ghost, by the imposition of hands, only the promulgation of the sacrament of confirmation and so espouse the opinion of several Fathers[2], who connect the institution of this sacrament with a far more significant rite. According to them, the gift, announced by the Savior, has more than one resemblance with what took place on the day of His baptism. We see in the Synoptics' narrative that Jesus had not yet come up out of the water when the Holy Ghost descended upon Him under the form of a dove in order to officially consecrate him as the Messias. The washing with water and the unction of the Holy Ghost appear to be two operations, really distinct in time, so that just as we are agreed to see in the baptism of Jesus the first Christian baptism, so, to be logical, should we recognize in the unction of the Holy Spirit the first confirmation. Indeed the washing with water and the unction of the Holy Spirit are very closely connected, the latter being the completion of the former — so much so that St. John the Baptist was able to

1. Cf. P. Pourrat, *Theology of the sacraments*, pp. 305-306. — Ch. Ruch, *La Confirmation dans la sainte Écriture*, in *Dict. de Théol. cath.* art. *Confirmation*, vol. III, pp. 1024-1025.

2. Notably St. Optatus of Milevis, and St. Cyril of Jerusalem; cf. *infra*, pp. 130-132.

describe the whole process by one simple expression, « to baptize in the Holy Ghost[1] ». But is it not true that baptism and confirmation have always been united by the closest ties, to such an extent that the Church has been constant in her teaching that to be a perfect christian one must have received confirmation, and that the practice of administering this sacrament immediately after baptism was adopted in the beginnings of Christianity and continued for many years afterwards? John the Baptist does indeed treat the two operations as if they formed but one act : « to baptize in the Holy Ghost », but precisely is there not more implied in this formula than what is generally conceded? How strange indeed does this expression sound, if it means only the baptism of water which remits sin through the communication of sanctifying grace, and in consequence through the communication of the Holy Ghost, for this is not the special unction of the Holy Ghost which the phrase seems particularly to have in view. On the other hand, how easily it can be understood if considered as a formula indicating, by a bold abridgement, both the washing with water for the remission of sins through the ordinary communication of the Holy Ghost, and, also, that special unction of the Holy Ghost, which makes of every new Christian a witness to the Messias. Of course, at the baptism of Jesus there was a real washing with water, whereas there was no anointing with oil neither was there any imposition of hands, yet there was a spiritual anointing symbolized by the descent of the dove and the voice heard from the heavens. When therefore it became necessary to communicate this spiritual anointing without any of the signs which marked its presence at the baptism of Jesus, or on the day of Pentecost, it was fitting that it should be symbolized and even really produced by the imposition of hands or the anointing with oil or by both of these rites.

---

1. Mt., III, 12; Mk., I, 7; Lk., III, 16; Jn., I, 34.

Tradition. — The Apostles had imposed hands after baptism in order to communicate to neophytes the gift of the Holy Ghost. Their successors imitated this example, considering baptism and confirmation as two distinct and separate rites, but administering the one immediately after the other, according to the Apostolic practice. The result was, that the two rites soon took on the appearance of one and the same ceremony, called by one name, baptism, and this is why we find little mention in the tradition of the first two centuries concerning the sacrament of confirmation. Some passages, however, deserve to be noticed. St. Clement of Rome, enumerating the virtues and graces received by the church of Corinth, cites « the complete infusion of the Holy Ghost[1] ». In the *Shepherd*, the angel of penance reminds Hermas that he was « confirmed and fortified by the Spirit[2] ». It is through the laver of penance, and the *gnosis* of God — which washes away the crimes of the people of God — that we have believed, says St. Justin in his *Dialogue with Trypho*. But is not this laver of penance and the gnosis of God identical with the laver of regeneration and the renovation of the Holy Ghost spoken of by St. Paul in his Epistle to Titus, and in which we have seen an allusion to baptism and confirmation[3]? Finally, St. Irenaeus writes that the Holy Ghost is given, not by means of magic, as Simon Magus claimed, but by the imposition of hands[4].

In the third century the doctrine of confirmation assumes an important place in Christian literature. « The Church of Rome, like the other Apostolic Churches, and like the Church of Africa, » says Tertullian, in his *De praescriptione*, « gives new birth to her children in water, clothes them with the Holy Ghost, and feeds them with the Eucharist[5]. »

---

1. *Ad. Cor.*, II, 2.
2. Herm., Simil., IX, 1, 2.
3. *Dial.*, XIV. Cf. *supra*, p. 123, n. 3.
4. *Haer.*, I, 1; XXIII, 1.
5. *De Praescriptione*, XXXVI.

And again in the *De baptismo*. « On stepping forth from the font we are anointed with consecrated oil, according to the rite of the Old Testament, enjoining that all priests be anointed... Though the unction takes place in the flesh, the benefit is a spiritual benefit... *After that the hand is laid upon us in benediction, invoking and inviting the Holy Spirit*... This rite is a remembrance of the old rite by which Jacob blessed the children of Joseph, Ephraim and Manasses, imposing hands on them. Then the Holy Ghost comes down from the Father upon our bodies which have been cleansed and blessed[1]. » In the *De Resurrectione Carnis* of the same author, we read that famous text which we must cite once more, in reference to confirmation. « The flesh is washed that the soul may be cleansed; the flesh is anointed that the soul may be consecrated; the flesh is sealed with the sign of the cross that the soul may be strengthened; the flesh is overshadowed by the imposition of hands that the soul may be illuminated by the Spirit[2]. » It matters very little for our present purpose whether, according to Tertullian, the unction given after the washing and before the imposition of hands, was one of the ceremonies of baptism or one of the ceremonies of confirmation. What we are interested in and what is certain is that, at the time Tertullian wrote, there existed in Africa, as well as at Rome and in all the Apostolic churches, a rite distinct from that of baptism, especially instituted for the imparting of the Holy Ghost.

St. Cyprian is more precise. « Christian regeneration », he writes, « takes place not through the imposition of hands, which communicates the Holy Ghost to the soul, but in baptism[3]. » He adds that the Holy Ghost is given by the imposition of the hands of the bishop; it is the seal of the Lord Jesus, *signaculum dominicum,* that is, the rite which

1. *De Baptismo,* VII-VIII.
2. *De resurrectione carnis,* VIII.
3. *Epist.* LXXIV, 7, ed. Hartel.

perfects and seals the baptismal rite [1]. The controversy about baptism administered by heretics gave the holy bishop another opportunity of re-affirming the distinction between the two rites. The custom prevailed at Rome merely to impose hands on those who, baptized outside the Church, asked to be admitted into it [2]. St. Cyprian was strong in affirming that the imposition of hands could have no efficacy, unless preceded by true baptism, and therefore, since it was necessary to repeat baptism, confirmation should also be repeated [3].

From the fourth century on witnesses become more numerous.

In the West, St. Optatus of Milevis sees in the baptism of Our Lord first the washing with water, secondly the spiritual unction of the Father transmitted under the form of a dove and officially consecrating Jesus as the Messias, thirdly, the voice of the Father taking the place of the imposition of hands [4]. Hence, our Savior received not only the washing with water, but also its complement. Like Christ, continues St. Optatus, Christians receive baptism and the complement of baptism, namely, the unction with holy Chrism. This

---

1. *Epist.* LXXIII, 9.

2. We are not certain whether the imposition of hands given to heretics in Rome was confirmation; it is even probable that it was the sacrament of penance. At that time the two sacraments had the same ritual, namely, an imposition of hands and a prayer; the only difference being in the form of the prayer. Cf. infra, p. 154, n. 5.

3. *Epist.* LXXII, 1.

4. *De Schism. donatist.*, l. IV, VII; *P. L.*, LIV, 1040 : *Descendit* [*Christus*] *in aquam, non quia erat quod in Deo mundaretur, sed superventurum oleum aqua debuit antecedere, ad mysteria initianda et ordinanda, et implenda baptismatis; lotus, cum in Joannis manibus haberetur, secutus est ordo mysterii, et complevit Pater quod rogaverat Filius et quod nuntiaverat Spiritus Sanctus. Apertum est cælum Deo Patre ungente, spiritale oleum statim in imagine columbae descendit, et insedit capiti ejus, et perfudit oleo unde capit dici Christus, quando unctus est a Deo Patre; cui, ne manus impositio defuisse videretur, vox audita est Dei de nube dicentis : « Hic est Filius meus... »*

second rite has a special efficacy which the Donatists most foolishly deny when they seek to re-administer not only baptism, but also the unction with Chrism, *confectum jam chrisma*[1].

The author of the *De Sacramentis* teaches that baptismal immersion is followed by the spiritual seal — *signaculum spiritale* — for baptism demands a complement, namely, the imparting of the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost[2]. St. Ambrose, in the *De Mysteriis*, writes that on emerging from the baptismal water the neophyte is marked with the *signaculum spiritale* and is thus « confirmed » by Christ[3].

On being consulted by Decentius, bishop of Gubbio, Pope Innocent I. cites the ecclesiastical custom according to which bishops administer to children after their baptism the « consignation » or the anointing with holy Chrism, in order to impart to them the Holy Ghost[4]. In several of his writings, St. Augustine treats either of the imposition of hands as conferring the Holy Spirit, or of the visible unction with oil as productive of the invisible anointing with the Holy Ghost. He explicitly calls the imposition of hands and the anointing a sacrament[5]. In one of his sermons,

---

1. *Ibid.*, l. VII, iv : *Oleum enim simplex est, et nomen suum et proprium habet : confectum jam chrisma vocatur, in quo est suavitas, quæ cutem conscientiæ mollit, exclusa duritia peccatorum; quæ animum innovat lenem : quæ sedem Spiritui Sancto parat, ut invitatus illic, asperitate fugata, libenter inhabitare dignetur.*

2. *De sacramentis*, l. III, 8; *P. L.*, XVI, 434 : *Sequitur spiritale signaculum quod audistis hodie legi; quia post fontem superest ut perfectio fiat; quando ad invocationem sacerdotis Spiritus Sanctus infunditur, Spiritus sapientiæ et intellectus, Spiritus consilii atque virtutis, Spiritus cognitionis atque pietatis, Spiritus sancti timoris : septem quasi virtutes Spiritus.*

3. *De Mysteriis*, 42.

4. Denz., 98.

5. *In epist. Joan.*, tract. III, 5; *P. L.*, XXXV, 2000 : *Unctio spiritualic ipse Spiritus Sanctus est, cujus sacramentum est in unctione visibili. Hanc unctionem Christi dicit [Joannes] omnes qui habent, cognoscere malos et bonos; nec opus esse ut doceantur, quia ipsa unctio docet eos.* Cf. *ibid.* tract. VI, 10, in which the imparting of the Holy Ghost is ascribed to the rite of the imposition of hands.

St. Leo the Great reminds his hearers that they have received « the unction of salvation and the seal of eternal life[1] ». Finally, an anonymous writer of the fifth century, in a homily on Pentecost day, draws out a parallel between baptism and confirmation in which the distinction between the two rites and the diversity of their effects are clearly set off. In baptism, he says, we are born into the Christian life : after baptism we are equipped for the fight ; in baptism, we are washed, after baptism we are strenghtened. Confirmation arms us and fits us for the battles of this world. When the Holy Ghost is communicated to our souls, we are enlightened by the gift of his wisdom, built up in our faith, perfected[2].

St. Cyril of Jerusalem is the most important witness in the East towards the middle of the fourth century ; for he testifies both to the existence and the origin of the sacrament of confirmation. We find a full description of the sacrament in his seventeenth catechetical lecture, where, addressing his catechumens, he says : « Approach the minister of baptism, but approaching, remember the Holy Ghost : He is present in readiness to seal thy soul ; he shall give thee that seal, σφραγίδα, at which evil spirits tremble ; thou wilt receive weapons terrible to the evil spirits, thou wilt receive strength... All thy life will the Comforter abide with thee ; He will care for thee, as for his own soldier[3]. » The twenty-first catechetical lecture deals with the sacrament of confir-

1. *Serm.* XXIV, VI ; *P. L.*, LIV, 207.

2. Cf. *Max. biblioth. vet. Patr.*, t. VI, p. 649 : *In baptismo regeneramur ad vitam : post baptismum confirmamur ad pugnam ; in baptismo alimur [abluimur] : post baptismum roboramur... Confirmatio armat et instruit ad agones mundi hujus et prælia... Per Spiritum Sanctum dono sapientiæ spiritualis illuminamur, ædificamur... consummamur.* This text was fraudulently inserted by the author of the *False Decretals* in the letter of Pope Melchiades (d. 314). Cf. *P. L.*, CXXX, 240. Not knowing of this subterfuge, St. Thomas quotes it as originating from Pope Melchiades. Cf. *Sum. Theol.*, III, q. LXXII, a. 1.

3. *Catech.* XVII, 35-37.

mation, and St. Cyril explains the sacramental rite and its divine origin. « After His baptism in the Jordan », he says to the catechumens, « Christ received the Holy Ghost under the form of a dove; so shall you, after coming up from the pool of sacred streams, be anointed with visible chrism, the emblem of that wherewith Christ was anointed, that is, the Holy Ghost. Beware, then, of supposing that this chrism is nothing more than an empty symbol, for, as the bread of the Eucharist, after the invocation of the Holy Ghost, is mere bread no longer, but the body of Christ, so also, in due proportion, this holy ointment is no more simple ointment nor (so to say) common after the invocation, but the gift of Christ; and, by the presence of His Godhead, it causes in us the Holy Ghost. It is symbolically applied to your forehead, and your other senses, and while your body is anointed with visible ointment, your soul is sanctified by the Holy and life-giving Spirit. Once you have received this unction, be careful to preserve it unspotted and without reproach. It will teach you all things; it will be the spiritual preservative of your body and the safeguard of your soul[1]. » St. Cyril of

---

1. *Catech.* XXI. (On the Mysteries III). « Having been *baptized unto Christ* and *put on Christ*, ye have been made conformable to the Son of God; for God having *predestinated us to the adoption of sons*, made us *share the fashion of Christ's glorious body*. Being therefore made *partakers of Christ*, ye are properly called Christs, and of you God says, « Touch not My Christs, or anointed! ». Now ye were made Christs, by receiving the emblem of the Holy Ghost; and all things were in a figure wrought in you, because ye are figures of Christ. He also bathed Himself in the river Jordan, and having imparted of the fragrance of His Godhead to the waters, He came up from them; and the Holy Ghost in substance lighted on Him, like resting upon like. In the same manner to you also, after you had come up from the pool of the sacred streams, was given the unction, the emblem of that wherewith Christ was anointed; and this is the Holy Ghost; of whom also the blessed Isaias, in his prophecy respecting Him, says in the person of the Lord, « The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He hath anointed Me to preach glad tidings to the poor. »

« For Christ was not anointed by men with oil or material ointment, but the Father having appointed Him to be the Savior of the whole world, anointed Him with the Holy Ghost, as Peter says, « Jesus of Nazareth, whom God anointed with the Holy Ghost ». And David the Prophet cried, saying, « Thy throne

Jerusalem could not have been more explicit in his statement. About the same time St. Athanasius, in one of his letters,

---

O God, is for ever and ever; a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of Thy kingdom; Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity; therefore God, even Thy God hath anointed Thee with the oil of gladness above Thy fellows ». And as Christ was in truth crucified, and buried, and raised, and you in likeness are in Baptism accounted worthy of being anointed with the spiritual oil of gladness, the Holy Ghost, who is so called, because He is the author of spiritual gladness, so ye were anointed with ointment, having been made partakers and *fellows* of Christ.

« But beware of supposing this to be plain ointment. For as the Bread of the Eucharist, after the invocation of the Holy Ghost, is mere bread no longer, but the Body of Christ, so also this holy ointment is no more simple ointment, nor (so to say) common, after the invocation, but the gift of Christ; and by the presence of His Godhead, it causes in us the Holy Ghost. It is symbolically applied to thy forehead and thy other senses; and while thy body is anointed with visible ointment, thy soul is sanctified by the Holy and life-giving Spirit.

« And ye were first anointed on your forehead, that ye might be delivered from the shame which the first man, when he had transgressed, bore about with him everywhere; and that *with open face ye might behold as in a glass the glory of the Lord*. Then on your ears, that ye might receive ears quick to hear the divine Mysteries, of which Isaias has said : « The Lord wakened mine ear to hear »; and the Lord Jesus in the Gospel : « He that hath ears to hear let him hear ». Then on your nostrils, that receiving the sacred ointment ye may say : « We are to God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved. » Then on your breast; that having put on the breast-plate of righteousness, ye may stand against the wiles of the devil. For as Christ after His baptism, and the descent of the Holy Ghost, went forth and vanquished the adversary, so likewise, having, after Holy Baptism and the Mystical Chrism, put on the whole armour of the Holy Ghost, do ye stand against the power of the enemy, and vanquish it, saying : « I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me. »

« When ye are counted worthy of this Holy Chrism, ye are called Christians, verifying also the name by your new birth. For before you were vouchsafed this grace, ye had properly no right to this title, but were advancing on your way towards being Christians.

« Moreover, you should know that this chrism has its symbol in the Old Scripture. For what time Moses imparted to his brother the command of God, and made him High-priest, after bathing in water, he anointed him; and Aaron was called Christ or anointed, from the emblematical Chrism. So also the High-priest raising Solomon to the kingdom, anointed him after he had bathed in Gihon. To them however these things happened in a figure, but to you not in a figure, but in truth; because ye were truly anointed by the Holy Ghost. Christ is the beginning of your salvation; He is truly the First-fruit, and ye the mass;

recalls to mind the imparting of the Holy Ghost effected by the Apostles through the imposition of hands [1]. Serapion's Prayer Book contains the prayer for the consecration of holy chrism, that is, the chrism with which newly baptized Christians were anointed. In this prayer it is asked of God, through Our Lord Jesus Christ, that He impart a divine and heavenly power to the chrism so that those who will be anointed with it, by the saving sign of the cross, may receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, and that, protected by this seal, σφραγίς, they may remain strong, resolute, invulnerable and unassailable in their faith and in the knowledge of the truth even unto the end in expectation of the life-giving and heavenly hopes of the eternal promise [2].

A few years later, St. Basil discreetly alludes to the consecration of the oil and to the unction [3]. Again St. Gregory Nazianzene, denouncing the baneful practice of those who defer the reception of baptism, and in consequence that of confirmation, thus addresses his hearers : « If you prepossess yourselves with baptism and fortify yourselves with the

---

but if the First-fruit be holy, it is manifest that Its holinesss will pass to he mass also.

« Keep this unspotted : for It shall teach you all things, if It abides in you , as you have just heard declared by the blessed John (Cf. I Jno. II, 20) who discourses much concerning this Chrism. For this holy thing is a spiritual preservative of the body, and safeguard of the soul. Of this in ancient times the blessed Isaias prophesying said : « In the last days the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established ; — in this mountain, shall the Lord make unto all people a feast ; they shall drink wine, they shall drink gladness, they shall be anointed with ointment. » And that he may make thee sure, hear what he says of this ointment as being mystical : « Give all these things to the nations, for the counsel of the Lord is unto all nations. » Having been anointed, therefore, with this holy ointment, keep it unspotted and unblemished in you, pressing forward by good work, and becoming well pleasing to the Captain of your salvation, Christ Jesus, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen. » (Oxford Translation of the Fathers : *The Catechetical lectures of St. Cyril.*)

1. *Ad Serap.*, I ; *P. G.*, XXVI, 544.
2. Cf. ed. Funk, *Didascal. et Const., Apost.*, t. II, p. 185.
3. *De Spiritu Sancto*, XXVII, 66 ; *P. G.*, XXXII, 188.

best and strongest of helps, being marked with the holy chrism and the Spirit, what harm can befall you[1] ? »

St. John Chrysostom remarks that if Philip baptized without giving the Holy Ghost, it was because he had not the power, such a power belonging exclusively to the Apostles [2].

According to the *Constitutions of the Egyptian Church, The Testament of Our Lord,* and the *Canons of Hippolytus*[3], this was the manner of administering confirmation in the last half of the fifth century. On emerging from the sacred pool a simple priest made an unction on the forehead, mouth and breast of the newly-baptized person, saying : « I anoint thee with holy oil in the name of Jesus Christ. » The newly-baptized was then led into the Church, and the bishop, extending his hands over him, pronounced, at the same time, this cordial wish : « Lord God, who hast made this thy servant worthy of receiving the pardon of his sins for eternal life, render him worthy also of being filled with the Holy Ghost, send forth from on high thy grace upon him that he may be saved according to thy will. For thine is the glory, O Father, Son and Holy Ghost in the holy Church, now and for ever and ever. » The bishop then poured a little of the holy oil in the palm of his hand and laying his hand on the head of the person to be confirmed, said, « I anoint thee with holy oil, in the name of God the Father almighty, and Jesus Christ and the Holy Ghost. » After this he made the sign of the cross on his

---

1. *Orat.* XL, 15 ; *P. G.*, XXXVI, 377.

2. *In Act. Homil.*, XVIII, 3 ; *P. G.*, LX, 144.

3. According to Funk, the *Constitutions of the Egyptian Church* and the *Testament of Our Lord* were both taken from the eighth book of the *Apostolic Constitutions* : *The Constitutions of the Egyptian Church* about 450 ; the *Testament* a little later. *The Constitutions of the Egyptian Church*, in turn, gave rise to the *Canons of Hippolytus*. Cf. F. X. Funk, *Constit. Apost.*, t. II, pp. 109-110. — I. E. H. Rahmani, *Testamentum Domini*, I, II, *De collatione Baptismi*, pp. 129-131. — H. Achelis, *Canones Hippolyti*, 133-141. These canons are given in the appendix of Mgr. Duchesne's work, « *Christian Worship* ».

forehead and kissed him, saying to him : « The Lord be with thee » and the answer came : « and with thy spirit [1] ».

To sum up, then, Tradition is unanimous in proclaiming the existence of the sacrament of confirmation under the different names of *imposition of hands*, the *seal of the Lord*, the *spiritual seal, chrism, chrismation, unction, consignation*, or confirmation. The institution of this rite is attributed either implicitly or explicitly to Our Lord Himself. St. Optatus of Milevis and St. Cyril of Jerusalem think that the sacrament was instituted when Our Savior received the spiritual unction immediately after His baptism in the waters of the Jordan; they agree also that we must all receive a similar unction after baptism if we wish to become perfect Christians.

Scholastic Theology. — All the sacraments were instituted by Christ. This is, as we recalled in the opening pages of these *Studies*, a dogma of faith defined by the Council of Trent.

---

1. The Gelasian Sacramentary which dates from the end of the seventh century, includes an *Ordo confirmandi* almost identical. Hence it must be admitted that at this time and without doubt a long time before, the unity of rite in confirmation was very near perfect in the Eastern and in the Western Church. Here is the *Ordo* taken from Muratori's *Liturgia romana vetus*, t. I, p. 571.

Cum ascenderit a fonte infans, signatur a presbytero in cerebro de chrismate, his verbis :

Deus omnipotens, Pater Domini nostri Jesu Christi, qui te regeneravit ex aqua et Spiritu Sancto : quique dedit tibi remissionem omnium peccatorum : ipse te linit chrisma salutis in Christo Jesu Domino nostro in vitam æternam.

Deinde ab episcopo datur eis Spiritus Septiformis. Ad consignandum imponit eis manum in his verbis :

Deus omnipotens, Pater Domini nostri Jesu Christi, qui regenerasti famulos tuos ex aqua et Spiritu Sancto ; quique dedisti eis remissionem omnium peccatorum : Tu, Domine, immitte in eos Spiritum Sanctum tuum Paraclitum : et da eis Spiritum sapientiæ et intellectus, etc. Adimple eos Spiritu timoris Dei in nomine Domini nostri Jesu Christi : cum quo vivis et regnas Deus semper cum Spiritu Sancto, per omnia sæcula sæculorum.

Postea signat eos in fronte de chrismate, dicens :

Signum Christi in vitam æternam.

The question is : Did Our Savior institute all the sacraments Himself? In other words, did He institute them *immediately*, or did He institute only two or three of the sacraments *immediately*, and the others *mediately*, that is, by delegating the power of instituting them to His Apostles or their successors?

Since the Council of Trent, Catholic theologians have almost unanimously admitted that Christ instituted all the sacraments *immediately*. However, they realize that such a conclusion should be accepted as pertaining to the faith in very different ways according as to whether it is question of this or that sacrament. They have discussed and still continue to discuss the *mode of this immediate institution* with regard to some of the sacraments [1].

---

1. When treating of the institution of the sacraments in general, Alexander of Hales declares that all the sacraments have Christ as their author, although all were not instituted *immediately* by Him. Some of the sacraments, in particular confirmation and extreme unction, were established by the Apostles in virtue of a power they had received from Christ. Cf. *Sum. Theol.*, IV, *q.* v, *membr.* 2, a. 1. Further on in his treatise on the sacrament of confirmation, Alexander makes the statement that this sacrament was instituted through a particular inspiration of the Holy Ghost, at the Council of Meaux, held in the year 845, because this Council determined the matter and form of the sacrament. Before this date, he adds, the Holy Ghost was given to the faithful without the intermediary of a sacramental rite. Cf. *Ibid.*, q. IX, *membr.* 1, 2. St. Bonaventure accepts the teaching of Alexander of Hales, but in a mitigated form. According to him, the essential matter and form of confirmation were instituted by the Holy Ghost, but shortly after the death of the Apostles. *Postquam bases Ecclesiae Apostoli, scilicet qui a Deo non per homines erant ordinati praelati et confirmati defecerunt, instituit Spiritus Sanctus hujus sacramenti formam, cui etiam virtutem sanctificandi dedit. In IV Sent.*, *dist.* VII, a. 1, q. 1. See also *Ibid.*, q. 2. In his *Breviloquium*, however, the Seraphic Doctor, influenced no doubt by the thomistic teaching, changed his idea, and maintained that all the sacraments were instituted by Christ in person, although in different ways. Cf. *Breviloq.*, *pars* VI, c. IV. The doctrine of the immediate institution became more and more predominant as time went on. It was regarded almost as of faith at the time of the Council of Trent, so much so that many theologians were of the opinion that the Fathers of the Council had really intended to define it. As a matter of fact the Church defined in a general way that all the sacraments have Christ for their author (Cf. DENZ, 844) and in this

In every sacrament we must distinguish between the exterior and visible part, that is, the sacramental sign, and the interior and invisible part, or the spiritual effect produced by the rite. If Christ determined the spiritual effect, and also specified completely, although perhaps not in all its minor details, the rite to be used in order to produce the effect, the institution is said to be *immediate* and *specific* — *immediata et in specie*. If, on the contrary, Christ determined the spiritual effect of each sacrament, but was content to merely indicate either expressly or equivalently, that some rite apt to signify the spiritual effect was to be chosen, leaving this choice to the Apostles or their successors, the institution is said to be *immediate* and only *generic*, — *immediata et in genere*[1]. There is no doubt that certain sacraments, the

---

way she formally disapproved of those theories which would attribute to the Holy Ghost the institution of some of the sacraments. She made a special pronouncement with regard to the immediate institution of the Eucharist (Cf. Denz., 875) and of penance (Denz., 894, 899). For extreme unction, she defined that it was instituted by Christ, and promulgated by the Apostle St. James (Cf. Denz., 926). But on the manner of institution of the Sacraments, the Church did not wish to pronounce. Cf. P. Pourrat, *Theology of the Sacraments*, pp. 334-344.

1. It is from God alone, St. Thomas remarks, that the sacraments derive their efficacy; hence they can have no one but God for their author. Cf. *Summa Theol.*, III, q. lxiv, a. 2. It is Christ who instituted the sacraments. As God He exercised an absolute power over them, and, as man, He possessed a superior ministerial power which He used in establishing the Christian rites. *Ibid.*, a. 3. As it was Christ in person, who organized the Church, remarks Father Pesch, *De Sacramentis in genere, prop.* XVIII, it was fitting that He also in person should institute the sacraments. But Christ is truly the immediate founder of the sacramental system, whether He instituted the sacraments *immediately* and *specifically* or *immediately* and only *generically*. In the latter case, however, it is admitted that Christ determined the sacramental rite in a general way, in this sense that He declared expressly or equivalently that such an effect of grace should be attached to such a sensible rite best suited to signify it. But it is also added that He gave to the Apostles or the Church the right to select the constituent elements of this rite, just as He allowed them full liberty to perfect or change the rite once determined upon, without such modification affecting the substance of the sacrament. Cf. L. Billot, *De Sacramentis in communi*, thes. II, pp. 32, 33, n. 2. It has always been accepted, declares the Council of Trent,

Eucharist, for instance, were instituted *immediately* and *specifically* by Christ. But might it not well be that some others were instituted *immediately* and *generically*[1]? And, if so, does not confirmation fall among their number?

According to St. Thomas, the Savior instituted confirmation when He *promised* the Holy Ghost, who was to be given only after the Ascension. As to the holy Chrism, the matter of the sacrament, its choice was suggested to the Apostles by the tongues of fire — the visible form assumed by the Holy Ghost when He descended upon them on Pentecost day; for oil is the fuel of fire[2]. Hence, according to the Angelic Doctor, great liberty must have been allowed the Apostles to determine the sacramental rite of confirmation.

Such a conclusion seems to be that also demanded by an attentive examination of the evidence found in Scripture and Tradition. Whether the Savior instituted confirmation when He promised the Holy Ghost, or when He received the Holy Ghost after His baptism, under the form of a dove, it is certain that He is the immediate institutor of the sacrament. Not only did He specify the effect of confirmation, but He also made it sufficiently clear whether by approving the rite adopted by the Apostles, or by the facts attendant upon the descent of the Holy Ghost, at His baptism, that He willed the communication of the Holy Ghost to be attached to a rite symbolizing this effect of grace. The institution of confirmation, therefore, was immediate and, at least, generic. Was it immediate and specific? Our answer is decidedly, no, for it is too evident that the choice of the constituent elements of the rite of confirmation was made by the Apostles and the Church.

---

speaking of the Holy Eucharist, that the Church has the power to change the sacramental rite according to the exigencies of persons, time and place, without affecting the substance of the sacrament. Cf. Denz., 931.

1. Cf. Billuart, *De Sacramentis in communi, dissert.* I, a. 5.
2. *Sum. Theol.*, III, q. lxii, a. 2, *ad* 1um.

CHAPTER II.

THE RITE OF CONFIRMATION.

In our attempt to prove the divine origin of the sacrament of confirmation, we have adduced evidence from Holy Scripture and Tradition in support of the teaching that a particular rite was established by Christ having as its purpose the conferring of the Holy Ghost. We must now proceed to a study of the rite of confirmation itself, and try to reconcile the various ways it was administered. From the start, however, it may be well to point out the prescriptions of the present discipline of the Church with regard to this matter.

Prescriptions of the Church. — The remote matter of the sacrament of confirmation is, according to the *Decree to the Armenians,* holy Chrism, that is, a mixture of oil and balm blessed by the bishop[1]. The validity of the sacrament demands that olive oil be used to the exclusion of any other kind, and it is furthermore prescribed that a little balm be added — it matters not in what country it was produced — in sufficient quantity to render the aroma noticeable. The adding of the balm to the olive oil is a grave precept which, if neglected, would make the matter of the sacrament doubtful, and practically void. Finally, in order to be valid matter, the holy Chrism must be blessed by the bishop. The latter is

---

1. Denz., 697.

bound, under grave precept, although not as a condition of validity, to confirm only with Chrism blessed that same year. Hence the prescription of the Church to renew the holy Chrism each year on Holy Thursday, and to burn what remains over from the preceding year.

The proximate matter of the sacrament of confirmation is the anointing with holy Chrism, made in the form of a cross on the forehead of the one to be confirmed, by the imposition of the bishop's hands. In anointing, the bishop's hand must come in immediate contact with the person's forehead; no intermediary is allowed. To make use of some kind of instrument would render the imposition of hands null, and since, according to some theologians, this forms a condition of validity, the proximate matter of the sacrament would be probably invalid and should in practice be considered as such. The bishop is under grave obligation to make the unction with the thumb of his right hand. The sacrament would, however, be valid, if the bishop were to use his left hand, for in this case there would be really an imposition of hands.

Whilst making the unction by the imposition of hands, the bishop pronounces the following words, which constitute the form of the sacrament : *N., Signo te signo crucis, et confirmo te Chrismate salutis, in nomine Patris, et Filii et Spiritus Sancti. Amen*[1].

---

1. In the Greek Church, the minister of confirmation makes an unction in the form of the cross on the forehead, eyes, nostrils, the two ears, and the feet of the person, saying Σφραγὶς δωρεᾶς Πνεύματος ἁγίου which means, according to the explanation given by Cardinal Bessarion, at the Council of Florence, « By this sign is communicated the gift of the Holy Ghost. » Cf. J. Goar, *Euchologium*, pp. 291-292. This rite is considered valid by the Latin Church. Cf. Benedictus XIV, Encyclica *Ex quo primum*, March 1, 1756. For, as Fr. Pesch well remarks, the unction made by the Greeks really includes a sufficient imposition of hands, just as the formula used by them mentions the two essential parts of the form of the sacrament : the *expression* of the chrismation and the *designation* of the particular gift of the Holy Ghost. Cf. *De confirmatione*, propos. LV-LVI.

Has the rite of Confirmation prescribed by the Church always been in use? — At the very outset of their ministry, the Apostles confirmed by imposing hands. This rite signifies that the Spirit of God takes possession of the Christian soul, or is communicated to it. There is no reason to doubt that the Apostles added to the rite itself a prayer or an invocation to the Holy Ghost, but even if no distinct prayer were recited, we should have to consider it as implied both in the act of the imposition of hands and in the prayerful attitude of the minister of the rite. Scripture neither mentions nor allows us to suppose that the Apostles confirmed with holy Chrism [1]. Certain it is, however, that it was not long before the chrismation was added to the imposition of hands. In the East, they used the chrismation to the extent of appearing to forget the imposition of hands. Yet in reality the chrismation implies the imposition of hands, or, in other words, the chrismation is made through the imposition of hands. In the West, it is a question, at times, of a mere imposition of hands, at times of the chrismation, but if we compare texts it will be seen that the one included the other, at least from the second half of the third century. The imposition of hands was made by anointing with holy Chrism. In the beginning of the fifth century, a change takes place similar to that of the East and the anointing with holy Chrism comes to the foreground. Such are the facts as far as it is possible to interpret them by a close examination of the texts [2]. At a very early

---

1. The text of I John, II, 27-28, and that of II *Cor.*, II, 21-22, appealed to by some to prove that the Apostles confirmed with holy Chrism, are to be interpreted as meaning nothing more than the spiritual unction of the Holy Ghost conferred by baptism and also, by the imposition of hands.

2. In a recent and suggestive article, Father Galtier maintains with great erudition that until the beginning of the fourth century, the only rite used in the West to confer the Holy Ghost was the imposition of hands. He sees a clear confirmation of his thesis in Tertullian's *De Baptismo* where, after having treated of the washing with water, and the subsequent anointing with Chrism, this illustrious representative of the African Church proceeds to describe the rite which confers the Holy Ghost; this rite consists solely in the imposition of hands.

date, therefore, the Church added to the Apostolic rite of the imposition of hands that of the anointing with holy Chrism. This anointing was consequently looked upon as an essential element in the rite of confirmation. It was not long before it began to predominate in the East, so much so that the imposition of hands was scarcely ever mentioned. This was implied, however, in the unction itself, which was made by the imposition of hands. In the West, the addition of the unction came much later. Once embodied in the rite it ranked only in second place, and is not even mentioned in the writings of that period (third and fourth centuries). The imposition of hands was contained in the anointing. Finally, from the fifth century on, the anointing with holy Chrism came forward to the first rank as was the case in the East [1].

Solutions of the problem. — Numerous have been the

Egressi de lavacro perungimur... Dehinc *manus imponitur per benedictionem advocans et invitans Spiritum sanctum* (*De Baptismo,* VII-VIII). Father Galtier claims that St. Cyprian added to this imposition of hands the consignation which he calls *signaculum dominicum*, but nowhere does the Saint leave us to suppose that this consignation was made by anointing; on the contrary, various indications, and in particular the very name itself lead us to infer that it was a mere sign of the cross. We have to come to Rome, in the beginning of the fifth century to find, for the first time, this consignation made by anointing. Here we find Pope Innocent I, in a famous decretal, formally distinguishing the unction pertaining to baptism permitted to all priests, from the unction pertaining to confirmation, also given with the holy Chrism, but reserved to bishops alone. This distinction, of course, was not new. Father Galtier ascribes it to Pope Sylvester (d. 335). Cf. *La consignation à Carthage et à Rome*, in *Recherches de Science religieuse*, 1911, pp. 350-383. We readily subscribe to all these conclusions, but for reasons to be discussed later, we think it more probable that the first appearance of the consignation made by anointing is to be placed at the time of St. Cyprian's controversies with Pope St. Stephen. Cf. P. de Puniet, art. *Confirmation*, in *Dict. d'Arch. chrét. et de Liturgie,* vol. III, p. 2527.

1. The problem of the modification of the primitive rite of confirmation does not extend to the form of the rite. The reason of this is probably in the universal agreement that under the diversity of forms, those words which constitute the essential element of the sacramental form have always been carefully preserved. Cf. Ch. Pesch, *De Sacramentis, De Confirmatione, prop.* LVI.

attempts to explain the variations introduced into the essential rite of confirmation. St. Thomas [1], and Cardinal Bellarmine[2] after him, were of the opinion that the consignation with Chrism alone is the matter of confirmation. Christ, says the Angelic Doctor, confirmed the Apostles, giving them, without the sacramental sign, the *res sacramenti*, namely, the spiritual effect, the plenitude of the Holy Ghost. Even so, however, there was something corresponding to a sensible sign, fire replacing the consecrated oil. In this case, indeed, the ordinary sensible sign of the spiritual effect was not necessary, since God Himself condescended to manifest, in a miraculous way, the grace produced. When, however, God ceased to perform such miracles, the Apostles generally resorted to the use of holy Chrism, both to manifest and produce this effect of the grace of confirmation. This is the teaching of Dionysius the Areopagite in his *De Hierarchia*, re-echoed by Pope Melchiades in his *Letter to the Spanish Bishops*.

The historical school of the seventeenth century offered various solutions. Sirmond held that the matter of confirmation consisted solely in the imposition of hands. The anointing with oil, he says, was a minor ceremony, added at a later period [3]. The teaching of Morin was that the matter of confirmation has always been either the imposition of hands or the anointing with oil and that the one or the other could be adequate matter of confirmation[4].

All of these solutions fall short on some point. Had St. Thomas known the comparatively late date of the *De Hierarchia* and of the text he cites from the *Letter to the Spanish Bishops*, he would not have had recourse to such documents to establish the Apostolic origin of the anointing

---

1 *Sum. theol.* III, q. LXXII, a. 4, ad 1[um].
2. *De Confirmatione*, c. VIII-IX.
3. *Antirrheticus*, l, I-II.
4. *De sacramento confirmationis*, in *Opera Posthuma*, Paris, 1703.

with holy Chrism[1]. On the other hand, the solutions advanced by the historical school fail to explain all the facts of Tradition.

Suarez proposed another solution far more in harmony, it seems, with the data of history and the economy of the sacraments. The essential rite of confirmation, he says, consists both in the imposition of hands and in the consignation with Chrism. This solution seems all the more acceptable, if we add, with this great theologian, that the imposition of hands required is that which is inseparable from the unction[2].

We still have to show, if it is true, how it came to pass that the anointing with holy Chrism was added to the primitive rite of the imposition of hands, to form jointly with this imposition, the essential rite of confirmation. Maldonatus' explanation of this is that the Apostles continued to confirm solely by means of the imposition of hands, as long as the Holy Spirit condescended to manifest externally His coming into the soul by the different charisms. As soon, however, as these visible signs ceased, the Apostles added to the rite of the imposition of hands that of the chrismation in order to symbolize the characteristic effect of confirmation[3]. This

---

1. The *De Hierarchia* is a work written in the first half of the sixth century, and the text of Pope Melchiades' *Letter to the Spanish Bishops*, is taken from a homily of an anonymous author of the fifth century. In the first half of the ninth century, the forger of the *False Decretals* worked it up into the *Letter to the Spanish Bishops*, purported to issue from the pen of Pope Melchiades. Cf. *supra*, p. 132, note 2.

2. *De Confirmatione*, disp. XXXIII, sect. IV, 4. This opinion is defended by Hurter, *Theologiæ dogmaticæ compendium*, *De Confirmatione*, th. CCXVIII, n. 324; Ch. Pesch, *Prælectiones dogmaticæ*, *De Confirmatione*, th. LV, n. 515; A. Tanquerey, *Synopsis theol. dogm.*, *De Confirmatione*, n. 9.

3. *De Confirmatione*, 2ª quæstio, : *Christum* [*dicitur*] *ita hoc sacramentum instituisse, et Apostolis præcepisse, ut penes illos reliquerit* (*prout res postulare videretur*) *uti pro materia vel sola impositione manuum, vel impositione chrismatis. Itaque dum Apostoli viderunt per solam impositionem manuum, Spiritum Sanctum visibiliter dari, nunquam chrisma adhibuerunt;*

explanation is happy enough, yet it seems to presume too much, for we have no evidence that it was the Apostles who added the chrismation to the rite of the imposition of hands. It would seem more probable, on the contrary, that this addition was made later on by the Church to distinguish the rite of confirmation from that of penance, or the reconciliation of heretics. The latter rite consisted also of an imposition of hands and a prayer; confusions therefore were bound to be made. We do not know what happened in the East, but we do know that some came to believe that the custom prevailed, especially in Rome, of reconciling heretics to the Church by re-administering to them the sacrament of confirmation. Such an opinion was very common in Africa at the time of St. Cyprian, and so the Church was led to make some distinction between the two rites. This was done by declaring that henceforth confirmation would consist in an imposition of hands, given by means of an unction. The anointing with oil had always been looked upon in Holy Writ as the sign marking the special communication of the Holy Ghost and this communication itself had often been called a spiritual unction[1]. St. Peter spoke of an unction, when relating the descent of the Holy Ghost upon Jesus at

---

simul ac desiit visibiliter dari Spiritus Sanctus (desiit autem viventibus adhuc Apostolis), ut sustentarent christianorum fidem, adjunxerunt chrisma, ut significarent Spiritum Sanctum invisibiliter dari, sicut prius visibiliter dabatur.

1. Some critics would trace the anointing with holy Chrism to Gnostic origin. Cf. E. Renan, *L'Eglise chrétienne*, t. II. pp. 154-156. A. Harnack, *History of Dogma*, v. IV, p. 277. To enforce such an hypothesis, they argue that the first mention of an unction following upon baptism is to be found in the works of the Gnostic writer Theodotus. Cf. *Excerpta* , 81; *P. G.*, IX, 696. This argument is without foundation, for everything seems to point to the fact that the real borrower was Theodotus himself, or rather the sect to which he belonged. The rite must have been borrowed from the Christian ritual already in existence when the Gnostics severed themselves from the Church. Cf. Ruch, *La confirmation dans la sainte Ecriture*, in *Dict. de Théol. Cath.*, art. *Confirmation*, vol. III, pp. 1012-1013.

the moment of His baptism[1]. Finally the Church was perfectly conscious of the power allowed her by Christ her founder to select those elements which she would deem most suited to constitute sacramental rites.

---

1. *Acts*, x, 38.

CHAPTER III.

THE EFFECTS OF CONFIRMATION.

The sacrament of confirmation does not produce what theologians term the first sanctifying grace, that is, the life of grace, but the second sanctifying grace, namely, an increase of grace. The effect of the sacrament, we read in the *Decree to the Armenians,* is to give the Holy Ghost to new Christians in like manner as He was given to the Apostles on the day of Pentecost, that they may be strengthened and fitted, not indeed for any kind of battle, but solely for the battle of the faith. This is why Christians are anointed on the forehead — the part of the face which typifies respect and nobility — to show that they should never be ashamed to confess the name of Christ nailed to the Cross — « a stumbling block to the Jews », as St. Paul says, and « unto the Gentiles foolishness ». For this reason they are anointed on the forehead in the form of a cross[1]. If therefore, adds the Catechism of the Council of Trent, pastors of souls wish to show the effect of the sacrament of confirmation, they have

---

1. Denz., 697 : *Effectus autem hujus sacramenti est, quia in eo datur Spiritus Sanctus ad robur, sicut datus est Apostolis in die Pentecostes, ut videlicet christianus audacter Christi confiteatur nomen. Ideoque in fronte, ubi verecundiæ sedes est, confirmandus inungitur, ne Christi nomen confiteri erubescat et præcipue crucem ejus, quæ Judæis quidem est scandalum, Gentibus autem stultitia, secundum Apostolum; propter quod signo crucis signatur.*

only to explain what took place in the souls of the Apostles. Before Christ's passion, they were weak and cowardly: on the day of Pentecost, they were so filled with the strength of the Spirit of God that they immediately began to bear witness to Christ and to God with an indomitable courage[1]. Confirmation, therefore, is the sacrament which confers on the Christian the strength both to profess courageously his faith, and give testimony before all men to Christ and to God, by setting the unbelief of this world at defiance and by trampling over the human respect or the fear which can be inspired by the vagaries of false learning, and the sight of the material prosperity of the wicked. Such is the second sanctifying grace, or the sacramental grace of confirmation.

The increase of sanctifying grace is one effect of confirmation; this sacrament also gives the Christian a right to receive at the proper time many actual graces, all of which have the same purpose as the second sanctifying grace.

All seven sacraments indiscriminately, either bring about or confirm in us the presence of the Holy Ghost, either give or develop in us both the infused virtues and the gifts of the Holy Ghost. Confirmation however can be said to confer the gifts of the Holy Ghost in a more specific sense even than baptism.

Finally, as the Concil of Trent has defined, confirmation, like baptism and holy orders, imprints on the soul a character or indelible spiritual sign, by virtue of which the sacrament cannot be repeated[2]. Of all the points of doctrine dealt with so far, this one alone has been formally defined, for the part of the *Decree to the Armenians* that treats of the sacraments is, according to the remark of Denzinger, « nothing more than a practical instruction, although as such it is fully authoritative[3] ».

---

1. *Cat. trid.*, part 2nd., ch. IV, § 5, n. 19.
2. DENZ., 852.
3. DENZ., p. 237, note 1.

We may now seek for the foundations of this teaching in Holy Scripture, and Patristic Tradition, and state the doctrine of St. Thomas concerning it.

Holy Scripture. — According to the narrative of the Acts, the effect of the rite, which later on was to be called the sacrament of confirmation, is to give the Holy Ghost[1]. The gift of the Holy Ghost is a grace distinct from the grace of baptism, although intended to complete it[2]. It is a grace which equips newly baptized Christians with a special strength that they may bear witness to Christ, without fear or human respect, even when face to face with a cruel or ignominious death[3]. The gift of the Holy Ghost is usually accompanied by charisms, that is, prodigies which signify externally the gift itself, or by the communication of some extraordinary power, the purpose of which is to promote the expansion of the Christian religion[4]. These charisms, however, are only secondary and so they become less and less frequent as time goes on until they disappear altogether. We find no mention of them in the writings of the second half of the second century.

Tradition. — In the second and third centuries, the effect of confirmation is confounded with that of baptism, although the effect of baptism is considered more especially to be the remission of sins whereas that of confirmation is the imparting of the Holy Ghost. No special emphasis, however, is laid on this distinction, for it was a well known truth that there can be no remission of sins without some communication of the Holy Ghost[5].

---

1. *Acts,* VIII, 14-17; X, 44-46; XIX, 1-7.
2. *Ibid.*, XIX, 1-7.
3. *Ibid.*, VI, 10; VIII; X, 46.
4. *Ibid.*, X, 44-46. Cf. *supra*, p. 116, note 1.
5. Cf Cyprian., epist. LXXIV, 17 : *Porro autem non per manus impositionem quis nascitur quando accipit Spiritum Sanctum, sed in baptismo, ut*

In the fourth century, St. Cyril of Jerusalem explains, in his twenty-first catechetical lecture, the effect of the anointing with the Holy Ghost. « Before you were vouchsafed this grace, he says to the catechumens, you had properly no right to the title of Christians — although you were already baptized — but you were advancing on your way towards being Christians. This ointment is symbolically applied to your forehead and your other senses, and while your body is anointed with visible ointment, your soul is sanctified by the Holy and life-giving Spirit. You were first anointed on your forehead that you might not be ashamed of the cross of Jesus Christ; then on your ears, on your nostrils and on your breast, that you might be armed for the battle[1] ».

Towards the end of the fourth century, both the author of the *De Sacramentis* and St. Ambrose see in the unction conferred upon the newly-baptized Christian an unction similar to the one conferred upon the Messias. In describing this anointing, these writers do not hesitate to use the very same terms as those employed by the prophet Isaias, when announcing the consecration of the Messias [2]. When the

---

Spiritum jam natus accipiat, sicut in primo homine Adam factum est. Ante eum Deus plasmavit, tunc insufflavit in faciem ejus flatum vitæ. Nec enim potest accipi Spiritus, nisi prius fuerit qui accipiat.

1. Catech. XXI (mystag. III).

2. Is., XI, 2. The Spirit of God, says the prophet, will bestow upon the new David, the Messias, all the qualities which go to make up an ideal judge. The spirit of wisdom shall rest upon Him, i. e., the spirit that will teach Him the true significance of his office; the spirit of understanding, i. e., the spirit that will move Him to discern all the circumstances which should be reckoned with in rendering a judgment; the spirit of counsel, i. e., the spirit that will enable Him to select the best means to achieve His purpose; the spirit of fortitude, i. e., the spirit that will communicate Him the strength to overcome human respect and other formidable obstacles; the spirit of knowledge, i. e., the spirit that will teach Him the science of God and His law. Finally the spirit of godliness, i. e., the spirit that will incline Him to a conscientious observance of all the perfections of the law. This last perfection has been divided by

neophyte emerges from the sacred pool, they say, he receives, through an invocation of the minister, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and of strength, the spirit of knowledge and piety, and the spirit of the fear of God; in short, the seven virtues of the Holy Ghost[1]. This manner of stating the effect of the sacrament of confirmation has been followed by the *Gelasian Sacramentary*[2]. Thus, Tradition teaches that confirmation is a sacrament which gives the Holy Ghost to the newly-baptized Christian to strengthen him and enable him courageously to profess his faith[3]. It is according to the famous text of an anonymous author of the fifth century, who seems to have determined upon the name of the rite, the sacrament which arms the Christian and prepares him for the battles he is soon to engage in; the sacrament which strengthens for the fight, *sacramentum* (*quo*) *confirmamur ad pugnam*[4].

Are the Fathers as unanimous in admitting the character of confirmation, that is, the imprinting of a spiritual sign in virtue of which the sacrament cannot be repeated? St.

---

the Septuagint and by the Vulgate into two distinct virtues, piety and the fear of the Lord.

1. *De sacramentis*, l. III, 8. Cf. *De mysteriis*, 42.

2. Cf, *supra*, p. 137, note 1.

3. Protestants have made much ado about a certain text of St. Jerome in which this illustrious exegete asserts that the sacrament of confirmation was established not so much to promote the individual good of the soul, as to enhance the prestige of the episcopate. Cf. *Dial. adv. Lucif.*, 7-9; *P. L.* XXIII, 163-165. Their contention is that this text is a direct argument in favor of their own views of confirmation as administered by the Church. We have to admit that the idea St. Jerome had of the effect of the grace of confirmation was not a clear one, but it must also be conceded that the explanation he gives is the only one of its kind and that it can be accounted for by reasons entirely different from those brought forth by Protestants. St. Jerome was aware of the inexact distinction certain writers made between the effect of baptism and that of confirmation, declaring the former to be the remission of sins and the latter the gift of the Holy Ghost, and rightly observed that baptism had already given the Holy Ghost. He also allows himself to be carried away by exaggeration when he adds hence that confirmation is merely an ecclesiastical ceremony.

4. For the origin and fate of this text, cf. *supra*, p. 132, n. 2.

Cyprian calls confirmation the *signaculum dominicum,* that is, the rite which completes or seals baptism [1]. The author of *De Sacramentis* designates it by the name of *signaculum spirituale* [2]. St. Cyril of Jerusalem calls the effect of the chrism of the Holy Ghost the seal (σφραγίς) which causes devils to tremble [3]. But all these expressions seem to refer rather to the effect of the sacrament than to the character itself. The doctrine of the sacramental character in confirmation is brought out more distinctly by the fact, that ancient ecclesiastical discipline forbade to re-administer the sacrament once it had been validly conferred. It is true that there were hesitations in the Church concerning the conditions of validity of this sacrament. Whereas, for instance, in Africa, baptism and confirmation received in heresy, or conferred by an heretical minister, were looked upon as null, at Alexandria and in Egypt, baptism alone conferred or received in this fashion, was considered valid, but not confirmation. St. Cyprian accused the Church of Rome of having fallen into the same error [4]. It can be admitted, however, without difficulty, that such hesitations far from weakening the principle of the non-repeat of the sacrament already validly conferred, serve only to corroborate it [5].

---

1. *Epist.* LXXIII, 9.
2. *De Sacramentis*, l. III, 8.
3. Catech. XXI (mystag. III)
4. *Epist.* LXXII, 1.
5. It is a known fact that in St. Cyprian's days the Roman Church reconciled heretics by imposing hands on them. The question is : was this imposition of hands identical with confirmation? St. Cyprian answers in the affirmative. Cf. *Epist.* LXXII, 1. Moreover the *ordo ad reconciliandum apostatam, schismaticum, vel haereticum*, preserved in the Pontifical, requires an imposition of hands, together with a prayer of invocation to the Holy Ghost, and a signing with the sign of the cross. These reasons would incline us to believe that the imposition of hands by which heretics were reconciled was the ceremony of confirmation. On the other hand, however, it is certain that the rite of penance also consisted in an imposition of hands accompanied by a prayer. Pope St. Stephen, to whom St. Cyprian had written, calls the ceremony of reconciliation : *impositio manus in paenitentiam.* Cf. *Epist.* LXXIV, 1. According to St.

The doctrine of St. Thomas. — It is not sufficient, writes the Angelic Doctor, that the child come into existence, it is also necessary that he reach that physical and moral perfection which will enable him to act manfully in all things. What is true in the natural order is true also in the spiritual order.

Baptism initiates us into the life of grace. It was proper, however, that there should exist another sacrament the purpose of which would be to lift the Christian up to a supernatural perfection, and transform him into a person[1] capable of fighting the battles of Christ[2].

Confirmation, like baptism, imprints on the soul an indelible character, in virtue of which the sacrament cannot be repeated. This character perfects in the Christian soul that special likeness between Christ and His disciple, resulting from the reception of baptism, a likeness not of life, but of function; that of priest or mediator between God and man[3]. Through his baptismal character, the Christian participates in the priesthood of Jesus Christ, for he is signed with a sign which gives him a place among those who render to God the true worship, a sign which consecrates him as a member of the Church, and gives him free access to the sacraments and the other holy things in the Church's keeping. This character then endows the soul with a passive power, or an aptitude to receive.

But if we wish to worship God as He should be wors-

Augustine, the imposition of hands given to persons baptized and confirmed in heresy in order to reconcile them to the Church was not confirmation, but penance. Cf. *De Baptismo*, l. V, 33; *P. L.*, XLIII, 193. These reasons go to make up a very probable argument in favor of the opinion, that the rite in use in the Roman Church of the third century to reconcile those who had been baptized and confirmed in heresy, was not confirmation, but the sacrament of penance.

1. *Sum. theol.*, III, q. LXXII, a. 1.
2. *Ibid.*, a. 4.
3. *Ibid.*, 2. LXIII, a, II, 3.

hipped, we must not only take our share of the holy things He has left to the Church, but also battle against the persecutors of our faith by openly professing the Gospel of Christ. Baptized christians, therefore, should group themselves together in a spiritual army, and the character of confirmation is precisely the sign which enrolls the Christian in this army and consecrates him as the soldier of Christ. Hence this character is rather an active power — the power to fulfill one's duty as a Christian soldier and openly profess the Christian faith[1].

---

1. *Sum. Theol.*, q. LXXII, a. 5.

CHAPTER IV.

THE MINISTER OF CONFIRMATION.

Confirmation, as we have seen, is the sacrament which enlists the Christian in the army of Christ, and arms him for the battles of the faith. For this reason, the administration of this sacrament is usually reserved to the head commanders in Christ's army, i. e., the Bishops; the right should be extended to simple priests only in exceptional cases, for a grave reason, and by special delegation of the general of the army, the Sovereign Pontiff himself. After exposing the doctrine of the Church on this point, we shall seek its foundation in Holy Scripture, Patristic Tradition, and the writings of Theologians.

The Doctrine of the Church. — The Council of Trent has defined that the bishop alone is the ordinary minister of the sacrament of confirmation[1]. Even though he were a heretic, or under sentence of excommunication, the bishop would administer confirmation validly, even outside the limits of his own diocese and to persons not under his jurisdiction : for when the bishop exercises this function, he does so in virtue of his power of Orders. However, he can administer confirmation licitly only when within the

---

1. Denz., 873: *Si quis dixerit sanctæ confirmationis ordinarium ministrum non esse solum episcopum, sed quemvis simplicem sacerdotem: A. S.*

limits of his diocese. Consequently, he is forbidden to confirm his own diocesan subjects outside his own diocese, without the permission of the bishop of that place. He has, however, the right to confirm strangers who come to his diocese, because of the tacit consent of their respective bishops, or of custom. Except for grave reason, the bishop is obliged to confirm those of his diocesans who demand to receive the sacrament, providing, of course, they show the proper dispositions. He is even bound, as far as possible, to anticipate such demands, and facilitate the reception of confirmation by frequent pastoral visits in his diocese, at least to the more important centers where the faithful of neighboring parishes may assemble without great inconvenience. To allow from eight to ten years to lapse between pastoral visits would constitute a grave fault. The bishop is not obliged to visit the sick in their houses to confirm them, but such an act of charity on his part would be very praiseworthy.

By special delegation, the Sovereign Pontiff may confer on a simple priest the power to administer the sacrament of confirmation, but in this case the priest must use the holy Chrism blessed by a bishop. An Apostolic delegation of this kind is often granted to missionaries in mission countries[1].

History of the question. — In the beginning of the Christian era, the right to impart the Holy Ghost was reserved to the Apostles. The *Acts* relate that, although filled with the Spirit of God, Philip the deacon did not impose

---

1. The question might be asked : Why cannot the bishop who is the ordinary minister of confirmation, himself delegate a simple priest as minister of the sacrament, following in this a practice existing from time immemorial in the Greek Church, and current long before the schism of Photius? Pope Benedict XIV has answered this, declaring that a bishop cannot delegate a simple priest to administer confirmation in the Latin Church, because from time equally immemorial this power to delegate has been reserved to the Pope. Cf. *De synodo dioecesana*, l. VII, c. IX, n. 1, sq.; t. I, p. 179 sq.

hands on the Samaritans whom he had just baptized, and the narrative clearly supposes that if he refrained from doing so, it was because he had not the right. The Apostles Peter and John had to journey thither and administer to these Christians the rite which imparts the Holy Ghost[1].

During the second and third centuries, both in the East and in the West, Christian initiation always took place in presence of the bishop. As a rule, simple priests administered baptism, but whereas in the West they afterwards made only one unction with holy Chrism on the crown of the neophyte's head, in the East an unction with chrism was made on his forehead, mouth and breast. However it was always the bishop who imposed hands by way of unction on the forehead, in order to confer the Holy Ghost. Furthermore those sick persons who had received private baptism in their homes were obliged, once restored to health, to appear before the bishop, that they might receive also the rite which imparted the Holy Ghost[2].

In the course of the fourth century, in order the better to provide for the spiritual needs of the people, country parishes were established and entrusted to the care of priests. In Rome these priests could baptize and make the unction with holy Chrism on the crown of the head, but they were expressly forbidden to administer the *Consignation,* or the anointing with holy Chrism which bestows the Holy Spirit, as may be seen from a letter of Pope Innocent I to Decentius, bishop of Gubbio[3].

In the East, a different custom prevailed. Parish priests were given a permanent right to give confirmation, so

---

1. *Acts*, VIII, 14-17.

2. In a letter to Fabius, bishop of Antioch, Pope Cornelius complains because Novatus (i. e. Novatian, the author of the Novatian Schism), after having received the baptism of the sick, did not ask to receive the remainder of what is required by the rules of the Church, and had not been sealed by the bishop. Cf. EUSEBIUS, *H. E.*, l. VI, XLIII.

3. DENZ., 98.

that priests who baptized could also impart the Holy Ghost, by anointing the baptized person with holy Chrism in the form of a cross[1].

In the sixth century, this Eastern custom found its way, we know not how, into Gaul, but it encountered everywhere the energetic opposition of the bishops. In 593, Pope St. Gregory the Great issued a proclamation forbidding the priests of Caralis in Sardinia to administer confirmation to the children, and allowing them simply to perform the baptismal unction. This measure created disturbances, so that the Pope hastened to dispatch another letter to Januarius, bishop of Caralis, saying that in his first letter he had simply wished to recall the received discipline of the Western Church, but that if this ordinance was to cause trouble and anxiety in places where there was no bishop, he continued to allow simple priests to administer confirmation[2].

From the seventh century on, the theologians of the West are unanimous in affirming that the bishop alone is the ordinary minister of the sacrament of confirmation. The second Council of Seville, held in 619, forbids simple priests to perform the unction with holy Chrism, and to give the Holy Ghost through the imposition of hands[3]. St. Isidore of Seville teaches that the right to confirm the faithful belongs to the bishop alone, and refers to the narrative of the Acts for proofs of the antiquity of this custom in the Church[4]. In the first half of the ninth century pseudo-

---

1. Ambrosiast., *In Eph.*, VI; *P. L.*, XVII, 388. — *Quaest. Vet. et Nov. Test.*, q. ci; *P. L.*, XXXV, 2302.

2. Gregor. Magn., *Epist.*, I. IV, epist. xxvi; *P. L.*, LXXVII, 696 : *Pervenit quoque ad nos quosdam scandalizatos fuisse, quod presbyteros chrismate tangere in fronte eos, qui baptizati sunt, prohibuimus. Et nos quidem secundum veterem ecclesiæ nostræ usum fecimus; sed si omnino hac de re aliqui contristantur, ubi episcopi desunt, ut presbyteri etiam in frontibus baptizatos chrismate tangere debeant, concedimus.*

3. Can. 7; Mansi, *Amplissima collectio*, t. X, col. 559.

4. *De offic. eccl.*, l. II, xxvi; *P. L.*, LXXXIII, 823.

Isidore, the author of the false Decretals, affirms in a letter which he attributes to Pope Eusebius (d. 310) that the imposition of hands is a sacrament and that since the time of the Apostles it has never been validly conferred except by bishops[1].

When the Greeks heard of these doctrines, they immediately opposed to them the custom of their own church, according to which, from time immemorial, confirmation was administered by simple priests. Photius did not fail to side with them, in order to arouse animosity against the Roman Church. Ratramnus, a monk of Corby, who was charged by Pope Nicholas I to examine into the complaints of the Greeks, merely referred them to the Acts of the Apostles, the letter of Pope Innocent I, and the practice current in the Western Church[2]. New difficulties arose and a more satisfactory solution of the question became urgent.

To St. Thomas was reserved the honor of providing this solution. The Angelic Doctor began by recalling the letter of Pope St. Gregory to bishop Januarius. The evidence here is overwhelming and the point of doctrine admits of no discussion. Gregory the Great did confer on simple priests the power to administer confirmation. Hence we should avoid attaching too literal a meaning to Pope Eusebius' letter, wrongly looked upon as authentic by St. Thomas and all his contemporaries. St. Thomas clearly teaches that the

---

1. *Epist. Euseb. pap. Episc. Thusciæ et Campaniæ ; P. L.*, CXXX, 238 : *Manus impositionis sacramentum magna veneratione tenendum est, quod ab aliis perfici non potest, nisi a summis sacerdotibus. Nec tempore apostolorum ab aliis quam ab ipsis apostolis legitur aut scitur peractum esse, neque ab aliis quam ab illis qui eorum locum tenent unquam perfici potest, ut fieri debet. Nam si aliter praesumptum fuerit, irritum habeatur et vacuum, nec inter ecclesiastica unquam reputabitur sacramenta.*

Nothing could be clearer than this point of doctrine, neither could it be touched in more explicit terms. The author would have rendered greater service to the cause of truth, had he made these affirmations his own and cited them as proofs of the doctrinal teaching of his time.

2. *Contra Graecorum opposita*, l. IV, VII ; *P. L.*, CXXI, 332.

bishop alone is the minister of confirmation, but he adds that the Pope, being vested with plenary power in the Church, can grant to simple priests the privilege of administering this sacrament, just as he is able to give them the power to confer minor orders[1]. St. Thomas puts the whole question in its right light, and his solution has been universally received since the thirteenth century[2].

---

1. *Sum. theol.*, III. q. LXXII, a. 11. Theologians have completed the doctrine of St. Thomas by saying that if, in the Greek Church, the bishops are allowed to grant to their priests the power to confirm, it is by reason of a delegation from the Pope himself. In the beginning, this delegation was rather material or negative and consisted in this, that the practice obtained currency without meeting with the disapproval of the Roman Church. It became formal later on, and was proclaimed by the Council of Florence. Cf. DENZ., 697.

2. A difficulty may rise in the minds of some touching the dogmatic side of this same question. They may ask why the simple priest cannot administer the sacrament of confirmation without a special delegation for that purpose from the Holy See? Does the power of orders he received in ordination exclude altogether this right to confirm the faithful, and if so, can the Pope add something to the power of orders outside the rite of ordination by merely delegating a priest to confirm? In other words, is the power to confirm really included among the powers of a priest and has the Church, therefore, by reason of discipline, placed a restraint on this power that she lifts in circumstances to be determined by her alone? In the latter hypothesis the further question might arise as to whether the Church can limit the power of orders to the extent of rendering its exercise null and void. Pesch has given this question very careful consideration. The priest, he says, is in virtue of his sacerdotal character *in potentia remota ad confirmandum*, but for that power to become *in actu primo proximo* a concession of the Sovereign Pontiff is absolutely necessary. Whilst the bishop, therefore, is rendered capable of administering confirmation in virtue of his ordination, the simple priest has not in virtue of his ordination that same capacity or rather that capacity cannot pass from potency into act. He really does receive something of the power to confirm, but in order that this power be exercised validly the Pope must grant a concession which will supply what is lacking. Cf. PESCH, *Praelectiones dogmaticae, De Confirmatione*, prop. LX.

CHAPTER V.

THE RECIPIENT OF CONFIRMATION.

Confirmation is the natural complement of baptism since it gives to the Christian the grace to profess before others the faith he received for himself in baptism. Confirmation is not absolutely necessary for salvation, yet it is extremely useful and more so in a century of unbelief such as ours, when, at any moment, we may be called on to bear witness to God and to our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. We shall consider the doctrine of the Church touching the recipient of confirmation; then will follow a short historical sketch of the subject.

Doctrine of the Church touching the recipient of confirmation. — « It is to be observed », we read in the Catechism of the Council of Trent, « that the sacrament of confirmation may be administered to all, as soon as they have been baptized; but, until children shall have reached the use of reason, its administration is inexpedient. If not postponed to the age of twelve, it should be deferred at least until that of seven. Confirmation has not been instituted as necessary to salvation, but to enable us to be armed and prepared, whenever we may be called upon, to fight for the faith of Christ; and for this conflict no one will consider children, not yet arrived at the use of reason, fit subjects[1]. » The age of

1. *Cat. trid.*, part II, ch. IV, n. 15 : *Omnibus quidem post baptismum, confirmationis sacramentum posse administrari; sed minus tamen expedire*

reason, then, is the age determined by the Church for the reception of confirmation; children usually reach it in their seventh year.

Besides being of age, the candidate for confirmation must show certain dispositions. The validity of the sacrament demands, first, that he be baptized and that he manifest the sufficient intention of receiving confirmation. It is clear that this second disposition ceases to be a requisite in Spain and in several states in South America, as well as in New Mexico, where infants are confirmed immediately after their baptism, or, in exceptional cases, where persons are confirmed who never had the use of reason.

To receive confirmation licitly, and in a way that will be beneficial to his soul, the candidate must also be in the state of grace. It is further required that he be sufficiently instructed on the sacrament he is about to receive, and that he possess at least the elements of Christian doctrine.

Canon Law prescribes that those to be confirmed be presented to the bishop, boys by a god-father, and girls by a god-mother. The office of sponsor can be filled only by those who have reached the age of reason, and who have themselves received the sacrament of confirmation. Sponsors must touch the one to be confirmed when he or she is receiving the sacrament. They must be chosen either by the person who is to be confirmed, or by his parents, the officiating bishop, or the pastor. Parents are not allowed to act as sponsors for their own children. Heretics, schismatics, and, in general, all those who cannot act as sponsors for baptism, are excluded. Besides these conditions for the vali-

---

hoc fieri, antequam pueri rationis usum habuerint : quare si duodecimus annus non expectandus videatur, usque ad septimum certè hoc sacramentum differre maximè convenit. Neque enim confirmatio ad salutis necessitatem instituta est ; sed ut ejus virtute optimè instructi et parati inveniremur, cùm nobis pro Christi fide pugnandum esset : ad quod sanè pugnæ genus pueros qui adhuc usu rationis carent, nemo aptos esse judicarit.

dity of sponsorship, there are certain conditions for its liceity. Sponsors for confirmation must not be the same as those for baptism, except in the case where confirmation is conferred immediately after baptism. They must be fourteen years old; and, in general, fulfil all the conditions prescribed for the office of sponsors in baptism. Sponsors contract with the person confirmed a bond of spiritual affinity which places them under the obligation of seeing that their charge receives a good Christian education[1].

Are the faithful bound under grave obligation to receive confirmation? The *Catechism of the Council of Trent* answers that this sacrament is not essential to salvation, for baptism suffices to remit all sins and to impart the spiritual life to our souls. Moreover, we have no divine or ecclesiastical precept commanding us to receive confirmation under pain of grave sin. Hence it is commonly taught that the refusal or neglect to receive the sacrament would not constitute, by itself, a mortal sin. The case would be different if this refusal or neglect were the result of affected contempt for the sacrament, or gave scandal.

Are ecclesiastical students under grave obligation to receive confirmation before tonsure? A few authors reply in the affirmative, basing their argument on the text of the Council of Trent : *Prima tonsura non initientur, qui sacramentum confirmationis non susceperint*[2]. Most writers, however, are of the opinion that these words are meant merely as a recommendation, and that not to heed them would constitute only a venial sin[3].

Historical Sketch. — In the first centuries, confirmation was administered by the bishop, immediately after the cere-

---

1. *Cod. J. C.*, Can. 795-797.

2. *Sess.* XXIII, c. IV.

3. Cf. A. M. DE LIGUORI, *Theologia moralis*, l. VI, *tract.* II, *De Baptismo et de Confirmatione*, n. 183. P. GASPARRI, *Tract. can. de sacr. Ordinat.*, t. 1, pp. 304-305, Paris, 1893.

mony of solemn baptism, usually performed by the priest, assisted by the deacons. Confirmation was the second part of the ceremony of Christian initiation.

When the dogma of original sin became better known among Christians, they began to realize the necessity of baptism, even for little children. As a consequence, the practice of baptizing little children gradually gained footing, and confirmation was administered to them also, either immediately after baptism, as in the East, or after one or two years, as in the West.

In the fourth century, as we had occasion already to remark, parishes were established in the country places. The resident priest baptized the adults and the children of his parish, but led them to the bishop of the neighboring city for the ceremony of confirmation. With the rapid increase of the Christian population, bishops were obliged to make pastoral visits in their respective territories, as is shown by a letter of St. Gregory the Great, urging the Sicilian bishops not to be too much of a burden upon the pastors of the parishes where they go to administer confirmation[1].

In the thirteenth century, the Western Church deferred the confirmation of children until it might safely be presumed they had a sufficient knowledge of the sacrament they were receiving, i. e., until the age of seven, eight, nine or ten. This was the most wide-spread practice in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In the eighteenth century, Pope Benedict XIV, in the Constitution *Eo quamvis tempore*, made this a general rule[2]. Since that time it has always been observed in the Western Church, except in Spain, where the practice of confirming children immediately after their baptism has been maintained.

---

1. Gregor. Magn., *Epist.*, l. XIII, epist. XVIII; *P. L.* LXXVII, 1273.
2. Cf. *Mag., bullar. roman.*, t. XVI, p. 293.

CHAPTER VI.

THE LITURGY OF CONFIRMATION.

In the present-day liturgy of confirmation, there are three parts : the preparation for the sacrament, its administration proper, and the conclusion.

The Preparation for the Sacrament. — The ceremony opens with an admonition in which the bishop explains the conditions for the valid and lawful reception of the sacrament.

This allocution concluded, the Bishop invokes the Holy Ghost; then extending his hands over the candidates who are kneeling before him, he recites a prayer, and beseeches God to send forth the Holy Ghost with the plenitude of His gifts. This is a very ancient prayer, as we had already occasion to remark, for it is to be found in the *Gelasian Sacramentary*[1].

---

1. Cf. *supra*, p. 137. « While the baptisms were proceeding, the Pope withdrew to the *consignatorium*, where the neophytes were brought to him for the ceremony of the consignation (signing). The place set apart for this was, from the time of Pope Hilary (461-468), the chapel of the Cross, behind the baptistery. Before entering the chapel, the newly baptized first presented themselves before a priest, who anointed them on the head with the fragrant oil of the holy Chrism, saying :

« *Deus omnipotens, Pater domini nostri Jesu Christi, qui te regeneravit ex aqua et Spiritu Sancto, quique dedit tibi remissionem omnium peccatorum, ipse te linit chrismate salutis in vitam æternam.* »

« The baptized then resumed their garments, or rather they put on new white ones, being assisted in this operation by their god-fathers and god-mothers. Having been brought before the bishop, they stood in groups, over each of which

Administration of the Sacrament. — The sacrament itself consists in an unction with holy Chrism made by the bishop, in the form of a cross, with the thumb of his right hand, upon the forehead of each neophyte. In performing this operation the bishop is naturally led to place the forepart of his hand on the head of the candidate, and thus the unction with holy Chrism is made through the imposition of hands. This is the matter of the sacrament. Whilst anointing the neophyte, the bishop pronounces these words which constitute the form of the sacrament, N. *signo te signo crucis et confirmo te Chrismate salutis, in nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti* [1].

Conclusion. — After having confirmed the neophyte, we read in the Pontifical, « *episcopus leviter eum in maxilla caedit, dicens : Pax tecum* ». This rite is found for the first time in the Ritual of Durand of Mende. At first, it was said, the bishop struck the neophyte a slight blow on the cheek to impress upon him the duty of always remembering the sacrament he had received. Very soon, however, a symbolic meaning was attached to this rite, and Christians began to look upon it as having a parallel meaning with the blow dealt with the flat of the sword at the conferring of knighthood : an exhortation to suffer, with joy, the insults and affronts of the enemies of his faith.

The ceremony of confirmation closes with a prayer, in which the bishop beseeches God to lead those who have been confirmed by the power of His Holy Ghost even unto the end [2].

Then the newly confirmed are invited to recite the Apostles' Creed, the epitome of their faith; also the *Our Father* and the *Hail Mary*, to beg of God the grace to live a life conformable in all things with the truths they profess.

---

the Pontiff first pronounced the invocation of the Holy Spirit. » L. Duchesne, *Christian Worship*, ch. IX, p. 314. Transl. by M. L. Mc Clure.

1. Cf. *supra*, p. 142.

2. Cf. N. Gihr, *Les sacrements de l'Église catholique*, t. I, p. 135.

III

THE EUCHARIST.

The Word of God became man to ransom us from the slavery of sin. This He accomplished by a life of sacrifice the culmination of which was the bloody holocaust of Calvary.

Our Savior was not content with even this stupendous work. He has continued daily to renew His sacrifice on our altars, from the very beginnings of Christianity. True, it is no longer a sacrifice of blood, but none the less it is the unbloody reproduction of Christ's offering. He is there constituted in an outward state of death; His body, present under the appearances of bread, is mystically separated from His blood, present under the appearances of wine, that we might eat His body and drink His blood, and thereby become incorporated into Him, and reap the fruits of the sacrifice of the cross — our own sanctification.

Just as the Word became flesh in order to ransom us from sin by the sacrifice of Calvary, so He is sacrificed on our altars in order that we, through communion, may be incorporated into Him, and obtain eternal life or salvation.

Hence, there are two aspects to the Eucharistic mystery : the one sacrificial, the other sacramental; sacrament and sacrifice blending into harmonious unity. Christ renews

the offering of Calvary by being reduced to an outward condition of death : His body and blood are mystically separated, the former being present under the appearance of bread, the latter under the appearance of wine. In this consists the *sacrifice*. In this outward state of death, Christ is eaten by the faithful who, thus incorporated into Him, share in the fulness of His life, and there is the *sacrament!* Moreover, the sacrifice and the sacrament are two terms of one and the same act : transubstantiation. For it is the changing of the complete substance of bread into the body of Christ, and of the complete substance of wine into His blood, that reduces the Savior to that outward state of death in which He becomes our food.

It may be asked whether the Eucharistic sacrifice exists principally for the sacrament, just as the Incarnation took place for the Redemption? It appears so, if we take into account the express will of our Savior. Not only did He institute the Eucharistic sacrifice and sacrament simultaneously, but, the night of the last supper, He immolated Himself by placing Himself in an outward condition of death, under the appearances of bread and wine, in other words, of food and drink. In this way He clearly indicated that He sacrificed Himself to be our food. Then after having sacrificed Himself, He said : « Eat, and drink ».

We shall in turn consider the *sacrifice*, and the *sacrament* of the Eucharist, never losing sight, however, of the intimate relations which unite them. It is customary to treat first of the sacrament, and then of the sacrifice. Indeed, the sacrament is the end of the sacrifice, and therefore naturally occupies the first place. For the same reason the sacrifice and the sacrament are included in the one title of Sacrament of the Eucharist.

Since the twelfth century especially, the sacrament of the Eucharist has been the subject of great controversies aimed, it is true, less at the sacrament itself than at the realities contained therein, viz., according to their chronolo-

gical order : transubstantiation, the real presence, and the divine institution of the Eucharist. To include these in the question of the sacrament proper is to run the risk of giving these important questions a scanty treatment, or of involving the dogma of the sacrament proper, in irrelevant discussions. To avoid this twofold difficulty, it is preferable to dispose of these questions at once, before treating of the sacrament itself, the sequence of topics being thus logical rather than chronological. Hence, our division into five chapters :

Chapter I. — *The Institution of the Holy Eucharist.*

Chapter II. — *The Real Presence.*

Chapter III. — *Transubstantiation.*

Chapter IV. — *The Sacrament of the Eucharist.*

Chapter V. — *The Eucharistic Sacrifice.*

CHAPTER I.

THE INSTITUTION OF THE HOLY EUCHARIST.

The reformers of the sixteenth century denied either the real presence, or transubstantiation and the sacrificial character of the mass, but none hesitated to acknowledge Christ's institution of the Eucharist. Protestants continued in this belief until the beginning of the nineteenth century. In recent years, however, critics belonging to the Rationalistic school have been calling into question the fact itself of the institution of the Eucharist by Christ. We must therefore from the start *quote and examine their theories.* Before this, however, we shall give, in their logical order, *the principal documents* upon which the whole controversy turns.

ARTICLE I.

The Eucharistic texts in the New Testament.

General Description. — The Eucharistic texts in the New Testament can be divided into two series : the first relating *to the life of the Savior,* the second *to the history of the primitive Church.* To the first category belong the sixth chapter of the Gospel according to St. John, the accounts of the institution of the Eucharist, as well as the account of the rite in which Christ manifested Himself to the dis-

ciples at Emmaus after the resurrection. The second series contains several passages from the Acts of the Apostles, a quotation from the first epistle to the Corinthians, and another from the epistle to the Hebrews. In these different places we read of the partaking of the Eucharist among the early Christians.

The Sixth Chapter of St. John's Gospel. — This chapter is naturally divided into three parts. The first contains a narrative of the facts preceding the discourse. The second relates the discourse about the promise of the Eucharist. The third records the effect produced upon the bystanders.

1. **Events which preceded the discourse,** ÿÿ. 1-25.

1. After these things Jesus went over the sea of Galilee, which is that of Tiberias.

2. And a great multitude followed him, because they saw the miracles which he did on them that were diseased.

3. Jesus therefore went up into a mountain, and there he sat with his disciples.

4. Now the pasch, the festival day of the Jews, was near at hand.

5. When Jesus therefore had lifted up his eyes, and seen that a very great multitude cometh to him, he said to Philip : Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat?

6. And this he said to try him; for he himself knew what he would do.

7. Philip answered him : Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one may take a little.

8. One of his disciples, Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter, saith to him :

9. There is a boy here that hath five barley loaves, and two fishes; but what are these among so many?

10. Then Jesus said : Make the men sit down. Now there was much grass in the place. The men therefore sat down, in number about five thousand.

11. And Jesus took the loaves : and when he had given thanks, he distributed to them that were set down. In like manner also of the fishes, as much as they would.

15. And when they were filled, he said to his disciples : Gather up the fragments that remain, lest they be lost.

13. They gathered up therefore, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves, which remained over and above to them that had eaten.

14. Now those men, when they had seen what a miracle Jesus had done, said : This is of a truth the prophet, that is to come into the world.

15. Jesus therefore, when he knew that they would come to take him by force, and make him king, fled again into the mountain himself alone.

16. And when evening was come, his disciples went down to the sea.

17. And when they had gone up into a ship, they went over the sea to Capharnaum, and it was now dark, and Jesus was not come unto them.

18. And the sea arose, by reason of a great wind that blew.

19. When they had rowed therefore about five and twenty or thirty furlongs, they see Jesus walking upon the sea, and drawing nigh to the ship, and they were afraid.

20. But he saith to them : It is I; be not afraid.

21. They were willing therefore to take him into the ship; and presently the ship was at the land to which they were going.

22. The next day, the multitude that stood on the other side of the sea, saw that there was no other ship there but one, and that Jesus had not entered into the ship with his disciples, but that his disciples were gone away alone.

23. But other ships came in from Tiberias, nigh unto the place where they had eaten the bread, the Lord giving thanks.

24. When therefore the multitude saw that Jesus was not there, nor his disciples, they took shipping, and came to Capharnaum, seeking for Jesus.

25. And when they had found him on the other side of the sea, they said to him : Rabbi, when camest thou hither?

2. Discourse on the promise of the Holy Eucharist, ỳ. 26-59.

26. Jesus answered them and said : Amen, Amen, I say to you, you seek me, not because you have seen miracles, but because you did eat of the loaves, and were filled.

27. Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that which endureth unto life everlasting, which the son of man will give you. For Him hath God, the Father, sealed.

28. They said therefore unto him : What shall we do that we may work the works of God?

29. Jesus answered, and said to them : This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he hath sent.

30. They said therefore to him : What sign therefore dost thou shew that we may see, and may believe thee? What dost thou work?

31. Our fathers did eat manna in the desert as it is written : *He gave them bread from heaven to eat.*

32. Then Jesus said to them : Amen, amen, I say to you : Moses gave you not bread from heaven, but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven.

33. For the bread of God is that which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life to the world.

34. They said therefore unto him : Lord, give us always this bread.

35. And Jesus said to them : I am the bread of life : he that cometh to me shall not hunger; and he that believeth in me, shall never thirst.

36. But I said unto you, that you also have seen me, and you believe not.

37. All that the Father giveth me shall come to me : and him that cometh to me, I will not cast out.

38. Because I came down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of him that sent me.

39. Now this is the will of the Father who sent me; that of all that he hath given me, I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again in the last day.

40. And this is the will of my Father that sent me; that every one who seeth the Son, and believeth in him, may have life everlasting, and I will raise him up in the last day.

41. The Jews therefore murmured at him, because he had said, I am the living bread which came down from heaven.

42. And they said : Is not this Jesus the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How then saith he, I came down from heaven?

43. Jesus therefore answered and said to them : Murmur not among yourselves.

44. No man can come to me, except the Father, who hath sent me, draw him, and I will raise him up in the last day.

45. It is written in the prophets : *And they shall all be taught of God.* Every one that hath heard of the Father and hath learned, cometh to me.

46. Not that any man hath seen the Father, but he who is of God, he hath seen the Father.

47. Amen, amen, I say unto you : He that believeth in me, hath everlasting life.

48. I am the bread of life.

49. Your fathers did eat manna in the desert, and are dead.

50. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven : that if any man eat of it, he may not die.

51. I am the living bread, which came down from heaven.

52. If any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever : and the bread that I will give, is my flesh for the life of the world.

53. The Jews therefore strove among themselves, saying : How can this man give us his flesh to eat?

54. Then Jesus said to them : Amen, amen, I say unto you : Except you eat the flesh of the son of man, and drink his blood, you shall not have life in you.

55. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath everlasting life : and I will raise him up in the last day.

56. For my flesh is meat indeed : and my blood is drink indeed :

57. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, abideth in me, and I in him.

58. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father : so he that eateth me, the same also shall live by me.

59. This is the bread that came down from heaven. Not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead. He that eateth this bread shall live for ever.

60. These things he said teaching in the synagogue, in Capharnaum.

3. **Impression created by the discourse**, ÿÿ. 61-72.

61. Many therefore of his disciples hearing it, said : This saying is hard, and who can hear it?

62. But Jesus knowing in himself, that his disciples murmured at this, said to them : Doth this scandalize you?

63. If then you shall see the son of man ascend up where he was before?

64. It is the spirit that quickeneth : the flesh profiteth nothing. The words that I have spoken to you, are spirit and life.

65. But there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that did not believe, and who he was that would betray him.

66. And he said : Therefore did I say to you, that no man can come to me, unless it be given him by my Father.

67. After this many of his disciples went back; and walked no more with him.

68. Then Jesus said to the twelve : Will you also go away?

69. And Simon Peter answered him : Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life.

70. And we have believed and have known that thou art the Christ Son of God.

71. Jesus answered them : Have not I chosen you twelwe; and one of you is a devil?

72. Now he meant Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon : for this same was about to betray him whereas he was one of the twelve.

The Accounts of the Institution. — There are four accounts of the institution of the Eucharist. The first three belong to the synoptic gospels; the fourth to the first epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians. We may divide these four accounts in two parallel groups : the accounts of St. Matthew and St. Mark, and those of St. Luke and St. Paul. Though identical in substance, these two groups are independent of each other.

First group.

MATTH., XVI, 17-30.

17. And on the first day of the Azymes the disciples came to Jesus saying : Where wilt thou that we prepare for thee to eat the pasch?

18. But Jesus said : Go ye into the city to a certain man, and say to him : The master saith, My time is near at hand, with thee I make the pasch with my disciples.

19. And the disciples did as Jesus appointed to them, and they prepared the pasch.

20. But when it was evening, he sat down with his twelve disciples.

21. And whilst they were eating, he said : Amen I say to you, that one of you is about to betray me.

22. And they being very much troubled, began every one to say : Is it I, Lord?

23. But he answering said : He

MARK, XIV, 12-26.

12. Now on the first day of the unleavened bread when they sacrificed the pasch, the disciples say to him : Whither wilt thou that we go, and prepare for thee to eat the pasch?

13. And he sendeth two of his disciples, and saith to them : Go ye into the city : and there shall meet you a man carrying a pitcher of water, follow him :

14. And whithersoever he shal go in, say to the master of the house, The master saith, Where is my refectory, where I may eat the pasch with my disciples?

15. And he will shew you a large dining-room furnished : and there prepare ye for us.

16. And his disciples went their way, and came into the city; and they found as he had told them, and they prepared the pasch.

that dippeth his hand with me in the dish, he shall betray me.

24. The son of man indeed goeth, as it is written of him : but woe to that man, by whom the son of man shall be betrayed : It were better for him, if that man had not been born.

25. And Judas that betrayed him, answering said : Is it I, Rabbi? He saith to him : Thou hast said *it*.

26. And whilst they were at supper, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and broke : and gave to his disciples, and said : Take ye, and eat : This is my body.

27. And taking the chalice he gave thanks : and gave to them, saying : Drink ye all of this.

28. For this is my blood of the new testament which shall be shed for many unto remission of sins.

29. And I say to you, I will not drink from henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I shall drink it with you new in the kingdom of my father.

30. And a hymn being said, they went out unto mount Olivet.

17. And when evening was come, he cometh with the twelve.

18. And when they were at table and eating Jesus saith : Amen I say to you, one of you that eateth with me shall betray me.

19. But they began to be sorrowful, and to say to him one by one : Is it I?

20. Who saith to them : One of the twelve, who dippeth with me his hand in the dish.

21. And the son of man indeed goeth, as it is written of him : but woe to that man by whom the son of man shall be betrayed. It were better for him, if that man had not been born.

22. And whilst they were eating, Jesus took bread : and blessing broke, and gave to them, and said : Take ye, This is my body.

23. And having taken the chalice, giving thanks he gave *it* to them. And they all drank of it.

24. And he said to them : This is my blood of the new testament, which shall be shed for many.

25. Amen I say to you, that I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine until that day when I shall drink it new in the kingdom of God.

26. And when they had said an hymn, they went forth to the mount of Olives.

Second group.

LUKE, XXII, 7-2

7. And the day of the unleavened bread came, on which it was necessary that the pasch should be killed.

1 COR., XI, 2, 17-29.

2. Now I praise you, brethren, that in all things you are mindful of me : and keep my ordinances as I have delivered them to you.

8. And he sent Peter and John, saying : Go and prepare for us the pasch, that we may eat.

9. But they said : Where wilt thou that we prepare?

10. And he said to them : Behold, as you go into the city, there shall meet you a man carrying a pitcher of water : follow him into the house where he entereth in :

11. And you shall say to the good man of the house : The master saith to thee : Where is the guest-chamber, where I may eat the pasch with my disciples?

12. And he will shew you a large dining-room furnished : and there prepare.

13. And they going, found as he said to them, and made ready the pasch.

14. And when the hour was come, he sat down and the twelve apostles with him.

15. And he said to them : With desire I have desired to eat this pasch with you before I suffer.

16. For I say to you, that from this time I will not eat it till it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God.

17. And having taken the chalice, he gave thanks, and said : Take, and divide *it* among you.

18. For I say to you, that I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, till the kingdom of God come.

19. And taking bread, he gave thanks, and brake; and gave to them, saying : This is my body which is given for you. Do this for a commemoration of me.

20. In like manner the chalice also, after he had supped, saying :

17. Now this I ordain : not praising you, that you come together not for the better, but for the worse.

18. For first of all I hear that when you come together in the church, there are schisms among you, and in part I believe it.

19. For there must be also heresies : that they also, who are reproved, may be made manifest among you.

20. When you come therefore together into one place, it is not now to eat the Lord's supper.

21. For every one taketh before his own supper to eat. And one indeed is hungry, and another is drunk.

22. What, have you not houses to eat and to drink in? Or despise ye the church of God, and put them to shame that have not? What shall I say to you? Do I praise you? In this I praise you not.

23. For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread.

24. And giving thanks, broke, and said : Take ye and eat : this is my body which shall be delivered for you : this do for the commemoration of me.

25. In like manner also the chalice, after he had supped, saying : This chalice is the new testament in my blood : this do ye, as often as you shall drink, for the commemoration of me.

26. For as often as you shall eat this bread, and drink the chalice

This is the chalice, the new testament in my blood, which shall be shed for you.

21. But yet behold, the hand of him that betrayeth me is with me on the table.

22. And the son of man indeed goeth according to that which is determined : but yet woe to that man by whom he shall be betrayed.

you shall shew the death of the Lord, until he come.

27. Therefore whosoever shall eat this bread, or drink the chalice of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and of the blood of the Lord.

28. But let a man prove himself : and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of the chalice.

29. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh judgment to himself, not discerning the body of the Lord.

The disciples at Emmaus. — It is well to join to the accounts of the institution a description of the rite which the risen Christ used, to reveal Himself to the disciples at Emmaus. Among the early Christians, the *breaking of bread* always signified the Eucharistic ceremony. Moreover, the combined circumstances of the narrative lead us to believe that our Savior really gave His guests the Eucharistic bread.

Luke, xxiv, 28-35.

28. And they drew nigh to the town whither they were going : and he made as though he would go farther.

29. But they constrained him, saying : Stay with us, because it is towards evening, and the day is now far spent. And he went in with them.

30. And it came to pass, whilst he was at table with them, he took bread, and blessed and brake, and gave to them.

31 And their eyes were opened, and they knew him : and he vanished out of their sight.....

35. And they told what things were done in the way : and how they knew him in the breaking of bread.

The Breaking of Bread in the Acts of the Apostles. — There is no doubt but that the Eucharist is the subject spoken of in the second chapter of the Acts, ℣℣. 42 and 46, and in the twentieth chapter, ℣℣. 7 and 11. It even seems

likely that the twenty seventh chapter, ℣. 35, should be interpreted in the same way. On the one hand we read that St. Paul was accompanied by St. Luke, Aristarchus and two or three other disciples; and on the other, the mention of the *breaking of bread* in this place can scarcely be understood, unless a special character be assigned to it.

Acts, II, 42, 46.	Acts, XX, 7, 11.	Acts, XXVII, 34-36
42. And they were persevering in the doctrine of the apostles, and in the communication of the breaking of bread, and in prayers.	7. And on the first day of the week, when we were assembled to break bread, Paul discoursed with them, being to depart on the morrow : and he continued his speech until midnight.	34. Wherefore I pray you to take some meat for your health's sake : for there shall not an hair of the head of any of you perish.
46. And continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they took their meat with gladness and simplicity of heart.	11. Then going up, and breaking bread and tasting.	35. And when he had said these things, taking bread, he gave thanks to God in the sight of them all; and when he had broken it, he began to eat.
47. Praising God and having favour with all the people.		36. Then were they all of better cheer, and they also took some meat.

Participation in the Sacrifice by the Consumption of the Victim. — Just as the pagans were held to participate in the sacrifices offered to demons by taking part in the religious banquet where the flesh of the immolated victim was eaten, so the Christian shares in the sacrifice of Christ by eating the bread and drinking the wine, of which Christ said, « This is my body which is given for you : this cup is the new testament in my blood ». This Eucharistic doctrine is contained in the first epistle to the Corinthians, chapter X, ℣℣. 14-21, and in the epistle to the Hebrews, chapter XIII, ℣℣. 10-13.

1 Cor., x, 14-21.

14. Wherefore, my dearly beoved, fly from the service of idols.

15. I speak as to wise men : judge ye yourselves what I say.

16. The chalice of benediction, which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? And the bread, which we break, is it not the partaking of the body of the Lord?

17. For we, being many, are one bread, one body, all that partake of one bread.

18. Behold Israel according to the flesh : are not they, that eat of the sacrifices, partakers of the altar?

19. What then? Do I say that what is offered in sacrifice to idols, is anything? Or, that the idol is anything?

20. But the things which the heathens sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God. And I would not that you should be made partakers with devils.

21. You cannot drink the chalice of the Lord, and the chalice of devils : you cannot be partakers of he table of the Lord, and of the able of devils.

Hebr., xiii, 10-13.

10. We have an altar, whereof they have no power to eat who serve the tabernacle.

11. For the bodies of those beasts, whose blood is brought into the Holies by the high priest for sin, are burned without the camp.

12. Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people by his own blood, suffered without the gate.

13. Let us go forth therefore to him without the camp; bearing his reproach.

ARTICLE II.

The Controversy about the Institution of the Holy Eucharist.

The Question. — From the Eucharistic texts of the New Testament considered as inspired documents, and hence in-

fallible, it is clear that Christ instituted the Eucharist. But since the opponents of this doctrine do not admit any biblical inspiration, we must of necessity, for the sake of tactics, use these scriptural texts as merely historical documents.

At once we face several conclusions. First of all about the year 57, when the first epistle to the Corinthians was written, the Eucharist was celebrated in the Church in memory of the death of Christ, and in obedience to a command of Our Lord which St. Paul had handed down as he himself had received it. The account of this institution was told in words found substantially the same both in the Apostle and in the three Synoptics. Moreover, if we take into consideration not only the first epistle to the Corinthians, but also the Acts of the Apostles, and the epistle to the Hebrews, it is evident that the Eucharistic ceremony must have been frequently celebrated among the early Christians. Towards the end of the first century the celebration of the Eucharist was so common and the recital of its institution so familiar that the author of the fourth Gospel, while narrating the life of the Savior, thought it quite sufficient to mention the discourse about the promise of the Eucharist[1].

The evangelist insisted particulary on certain words used by Our Savior, to affirm the necessity of the Eucharist

---

1. The Gospel according to St. John does not speak of the institution of the Eucharist. Such silence has been capitalized by certain critics, ever desirous of showing that the sacrament of the Eucharist cannot be traced to Jesus. Yet in the sixth chapter, we read how the Savior promised to give His flesh as food, and His blood as drink. How can we explain the author's mention of the promise, if he were not sure that it had been fulfilled? He relates the promise in full, omitting the account of the institution, because, on the one hand, he wrote in the closing years of the first century, at a time, therefore, when the Eucharist was celebrated by all the churches, and when the origin of the sacrament was definitively told in the well-known liturgical formulas, and because, on the other hand, an account of the institution had no place in his plan. See Th. Calmes, *L'Évangile selon St. Jean*, p. 375.

for salvation, and to refute the objections of the people of Capharnaum, as though he wished thereby to remedy the vagaries already introduced, and overthrow the false ideas spread abroad even then in the early Christian communities.

These conclusions are to-day admitted by all critical exegetes. Even some Protestants favour the Catholic interpretation of most of the traditional texts found in the New Testament. They do not however admit the institution of the Eucharist by Christ to be a fact of history. On the contrary, they strive to show that the accounts of the Eucharist in St. Paul and St. Luke, and again in St. Matthew and St. Mark are not historic in what they relate concerning the institution of the Eucharist by Christ and that the sixth chapter of St. John is entirely destitute of historical value. Having thus set aside the historical reality of the institution of the Eucharist, they seek to explain otherwise the fact of the celebration of the Eucharist in the early Church. This way of reasoning is merely the particular application of their method of interpreting the writings of the New Testament. We shall expose in order their several opinions and then pass judgment upon them.

§ I.

THE HISTORICAL VALUE OF THE ACCOUNTS OF ST. PAUL AND ST. LUKE.

Objections. — The accounts of St. Paul and St. Luke concerning the institution of the Eucharist by Christ are not historical, because *they do not suppose* this institution.

Of the two series of accounts, only the second mentions the command to renew the last supper. That such a command is authentic is denied by several critics who explain that it was introduced into the narrative, because of the

conviction that the Eucharist was celebrated in obedience to the wish of Christ [1].

Some critics make much of the fact that the verses 19[b]-20 of St. Luke which relate the command to celebrate the Eucharist, and the consecration of the chalice, are wanting in the *Codex Bezae*, and some other manuscripts of the ancient Latin version, which would prove that these verses are a second-hand gloss [2].

Besides, they add that such a gloss is a mere repetition of St. Paul's doctrine which can have no historic worth since its source is a purely personal revelation [3].

But why should the consecration of the bread be considered historic, when of the verses relative to the institution of the Eucharist, the historian can retain as genuine only the following eschatological phrase : « For I say to you that I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until that day when I shall drink it with you new in the kingdom of my Father [4] »?

Answers to the Objections. — Many critics, including some Protestants, recognize the authenticity of the words, « Do this in memory of me. » Even if they were not actually pronounced by the Savior, they are the true expression of His thoughts [5].

The close connection, made by St. Matthew and St. Mark between the paschal meal and the Lord's Supper sufficiently demonstrates the desire of Jesus not only to have a

---

1. A. Andersen, *Das Abendmahl in den zwei ersten Jahrhunderten nach Christus*, Giessen, 1906. — J. Réville, *Les origines de l'Eucharistie*, Paris, 1908. — A. Loisy, *Les Evangiles synoptiques*, t. II, Ceffonds, 1908. — M. Goguel, *L'Eucharistie, des origines à Justin martyr*, Paris, 1910.

2. Andersen, *op. cit.*, p. 20. — A. Loisy, *op. cit.*, p. 528.

3. A. Loisy, *op. cit.*, pp. 520-521, 531-533, 538-541.

4. *Ibid.*, pp. 534-544.

5. F. Lobstein, *La doctrine de la sainte Cène*, Strasbourg, 1889. — H. J. Holtzmann, *Lehrbuch der Neutest. Theologie*, 1897. — G.-B. Stevens, *The Theology of the N. T.*, Edinburgh, 1901.

farewell supper with His disciples, but to establish a new Pasch, which was to be celebrated in memory of Him. Consequently, the one decisive fact which proves the institution is not so much the formula of St. Paul and St. Luke, or of St. Mark and St. Matthew, as is the general attitude of Jesus, whose desire was to preserve and yet transform the Pasch.

In order to solve the second difficulty, we have but to compare the documents relative to the institution of the Eucharist in their primitive texts. The words of Luke, XXII, 19-20, are indeed wanting in the *Codex Bezae* (6th century), as well as in several manuscripts of the Latin version anterior to St. Jerome, but this omission is of relatively little importance, since these words are found in the principal Greek manuscripts[1] : viz., the *Sinaiticus* (4th century), the *Alexandrinus* (5th century), and the *Ephraemi rescriptus* (5th century). We are justified in considering this omission as an accident of transcription of the Latin text, and a rather restricted one at that, since the longer reading is supported by Tertullian. On the other hand, whilst the *Codex Bezae* simply omits the words, the Syriac version of Cureton (2nd century) omits the words, but transposes and inserts verses 17-18 in their place : this transposition being an attempt to get rid of the apparent inversion of order, as to the bread and the chalice, and the apparent contradiction of the accounts of St. Matthew and St. Mark[2].

The omission in the Western text can undoubtedly be explained by analogous preoccupations.

---

1. The omission of verses 19ᵇ-20 in the Greek text of the *Codex Bezae* is not surprising, for the *Codex Bezae* is a Greco-Latin manuscript, the Greek text of which is adapted to the Latin, if it is not a mere translation of the latter.

2. The *Peshitta* of the New Testament (2nd century) simply omits verses 17-18; in the so-called Syriac version of Lewis (2nd century) by a combination of the verses 17-18 and 19ᵇ-20, the consecration of the bread precedes the consecration of the chalice. See Ch. Ruch, art. *Eucharistie*, in *Dict. de Théol. Cath.*, t. V, col. 1063-1064. Cf. Westcott and Hort, *New Test. in Greek*, vol. II, § 241.

If verses 19[b]-20 belong to the original text of St. Luke, they were not derived from the epistle to the Corinthians. In writing his Acts of the Apostles, St. Luke never made use of the epistles; most likely, then, he would not have used them in writing his Gospel. This is admitted by most rationalistic critics. In their opinion, verses 19[b]-20, though not a transcription of the text of the epistle to the Corinthians, reproduce faithfully the teaching of St. Paul, teaching received, in the words of the Apostle himself, not from the Savior's disciples but through a personal revelation. Therefore it cannot be brought forward as historical testimony.

True, the Apostle does refer his teaching to Our Lord as its source. Loisy affirms that what St. Paul claimed to be an immediate revelation was an auto-suggestion equivalent to a vision [1].

Some historians, on the contrary, think that St. Paul did not intend to ascribe his knowledge of the words of the last supper to a private revelation, but simply to assert that these words made known to him by tradition were truly uttered by the Lord [2]. The formula, however, « for I have learned of the Lord », emphasizes the pronoun, *I*, too much to be a mere announcement that St. Paul has borrowed from apostolic tradition. The Apostle speaks of a teaching received directly from the Master [3].

In the same manner in the epistle to the Galatians, St. Paul traces the origin of « his gospel » to a revelation [4].

By means of this text we can discover that the Apostle

---

1. A. Loisy, *op. cit.*, p. 532, note 1.

2. P. Batiffol, *Etudes d'Histoire de Théologie positive,* 2nd series, *L'Eucharistie*[1], pp. 5-6.— E. Mangenot, *L'Eucharistie dans saint Paul, Rev. prat. d'apol.*, 15 novembre 1911. — C. Rucu, art. *Eucharistie*, in *Dict. de Théol. cath.*, t. V, 1085.

3. Le Camus, *L'Œuvre des Apôtres,* t. III, p. 136, note 4.

4. *Gal.*, I, 11-12.

owes to revelation, not the historical facts, which were a part of the common teaching, but their inner significance; these facts however were received by the Apostle and handed down by him as part of his Gospel. The same is true of the account of the last supper. Here he relates the facts, he quotes the words of Our Lord, almost word for word as they are found in the Synoptic gospels, which can be explained by a common tradition, without any personal revelation, though the deeper meaning of these facts, their mysterious import, were revealed by Our Lord to St. Paul [1].

If this explanation be accepted it must follow that St. Paul and St. Luke are indebted to a common apostolic tradition, and that St. Paul, when he spoke of the institution of the Eucharist, was truthful in ascribing his knowledge of it to private revelation, although he had learned the facts from the disciples of Our Lord.

§ II.

The Historical Value of the Accounts of St. Matthew and St. Mark.

Objections. — The accounts of St. Matthew and St. Mark relative to the institution of the Eucharist by Christ are not historical, because *far from supposing* such an institution, they in reality exclude it.

They exclude it, says one critic [2], because Christ in using these words, wished to give them merely an eschatological significance. The Pharisees had often compared the kingdom to a feast, where the Messias, as the food of

---

1. J. Lebreton, art. *Eucharistie*, in *Dict. Apol. de la Foi catholique*, t. I, col. 1553.

2. F. Spitta, *Die urchristlichen Traditionen über Ursprung und Sinn des Abendmahls* (in his *Zur Geschichte und Litt. des Urchristentums*, t. I, Gottingen, 1893).

the elect, would fill them with his glory. During the last supper Jesus was so absorbed by these thoughts that He continually spoke of that messianic feast, where He would give Himself as food. In that kingdom, He said to His Apostles, I shall be your bread, I shall be your wine : you will eat of me, and drink of me.

What Christ said cannot be understood as an eschatological doctrine, says another critic[1]. Rather, it is a parable to which we do not possess the key.

A third[2] critic attempts to explain the parable. First he is careful to trim the text on which his argument hangs. Only two of the four accounts of the institution, he notes, need be considered, namely that of St. Mark and that of St. Paul. As for the others, St. Matthew's is a mere development of St. Mark's, as St. Luke's is of St. Paul's. Again the account in St. Mark, by reason of its simplicity and lack of liturgy is more ancient and historical than that of St. Paul. Now, an attentive scrutiny of St. Mark's account reveals the lack of any intention on the part of the Savior relative to a perpetual institution. The significance of the last supper has been misunderstood. Knowing that his death was approaching, Jesus gathered His disciples together in a farewell banquet. He himself did not eat, but, taking bread, blessed it, according to the Jewish tradition, broke and gave it to his disciples. In the same way, he took the chalice, blessed it and passed it to them. The bread thus broken and the chalice thus blessed, move him to speak of his death, and to foretell that it will be a source of blessing. The Savior is consequently speaking of his death in parable, using as terms of comparison the bread he broke

---

1. C. Weizsaecker, *Das apostolische Zeitalter der christlichen Kirche.* pp. 574-580, Freiburg, 1892.

2. A. Juelicher, *Zur Geschichte der Abendmahlsfeier in der ältesten Kirche*, published in the *Theologische Abhandlungen,* pp. 215-250, Freiburg, 1892.

and the wine he blessed. Nor is this an isolated instance. Elsewhere, in order to inculcate religious truth, Jesus had made use of the leaven, and the mustard seed, the new wine and the old skin bottle[1].

A fourth critic[2] considers only the text of St. Matthew and St. Mark.

In these texts, we are told, Christ presents the bread as the figure of his body, and the wine, as the figure of his blood that the is about to shed as the blood of the New Covenant. In the light of Exodus[3], where the covenant between God and His people was sealed by Moses with blood, these words of Christ are very significant : he is going to seal a new covenant in his blood. But of course that such blood bes hed for the remission of sins is out of question; the text which claims this being borrowed from St. Paul. It is conceded that Christ did command the repetition of the last supper, in order to commemorate both the repast during which He had announced the new covenant, and the miracle which introduced it, namely, the miracle of the multiplication of the loaves.

Answers to the Objections. — St. Matthew and St. Mark conclude the account of the last supper with these words of the Savior : « I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine until that day when I shall drink it with you new in the kingdom of God. » There is in St. Luke, after the blessing of the first cup, a similar note parallel to that previous declaration of the Savior : « I will no longer eat the pasch until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God ». Undoubt-

---

1. A parable is an action described from nature or the customs of the time, and intended to illustrate a religious truth. It is thus different from the fable, which though ordinarily taken from nature is more or less a work of pure imagination.

2. H.-J. Holtzmann, *Lehrbuch der neutest. Theologie,* t. I, pp. 296-303.

3. *Exod.,* xxiv, 3-8.

edly, then, the mind of Christ at the last supper was raised to thoughts of the kingdom. And yet His thoughts were almost entirely concentrated on the passion He was to undergo. To invert these two in the mind of the Savior is to be at complete variance with the Synoptic accounts and for no other reason than to substantiate one's own theory[1].

Hence it is far nearer the truth to say that during the last supper Christ announced His death. To say that the last supper witnessed no Eucharistic institution, but was used by Christ as a comparison, apt to shadowing forth His passion, that Christ here spoke in parable, as He often did is to give an interpretation contradicted by the whole life and practice of the early Church. If the Savior wished the last supper to be purely pedagogical in its significance, why did His disciples repeat it and how could they think that its continuance had been commanded by the Lord?

If only part of the gospel narrative is accepted, only part of the true meaning is grasped. Such is also the mistake of those who see in the last supper nothing but the announcement of a new covenant : a mistake in this case, the more striking that what is admitted as true presupposes a real institution, which can be denied only by the biased thought of prejudiced Protestantism.

When Moses shed the blood of the sacrificed bulls in thanksgiving, partly on the altar and partly on the people, he wished to seal as solemnly as possible the covenant made between God and himself in the name of the people. There was then a clear distinction between the alliance and its bloody seal. In the sacrifice of Calvary, no such distinction can be made. The blood that is shed is the covenant itself, and not merely its signature. It is the covenant in this sense that Christ through His bloody death offers to God a sublime homage of obedience and love, thereby obtain-

---

1. Cf. P. Batiffol, *Études d'Histoire et de Théologie positive,* 2d series, *L'Eucharistie*[1], pp. 59-63.

ing pardon for the sin of mankind. He therefore who recognizes in the passages of St. Matthew and St. Mark the announcement of a new covenant, must further admit that this covenant consists in a shedding of blood for the remission of sins. Hence this idea forms evidently an essential part of the teaching of the Savior. Further concessions are to be made. The last supper is much more than the proclaiming of a new covenant. Where do we read in the gospel that Christ presented bread and wine as the figure of that body and blood which were to be soon separated in death? Christ gives not the figure of His body, but the body itself; he gives really His blood and it is of His true blood that He says, « this is the blood of the New Testament shed for many ». As the Jewish Pasch reproduced and thereby commemorated the preliminary steps in the old covenant, so the Savior, about to offer the sacrifice of the new covenant, is concerned with its preparation. The latter is to take the form of a new and transformed Pasch, of which He Himself is to be the immolated lamb. In giving us His body to eat and His blood to drink, He tells us that the sacrifice He has just accomplished is already the sacrifice of the covenant. It is the anticipated covenant sacrifice, foretelling the great covenant sacrifice of Calvary. If then it is granted that Christ spoke of a new covenant, it cannot be denied that He truly said over the bread and wine the words handed down by St. Matthew and St. Mark; in other words, the entire narrative of the institution is historical[1].

---

1. The eschatological theory of F. Spitta, or the parable theory of C. Weizsaecker, and Juelicher, or the theory of H.-J. Holtzmann, who sees in the Eucharist a mere figure of the blood of the new covenant, can indeed find some support in the texts of the New Testament. There are other theories, however, which are the offspring of pure imagination, and far removed from the biblical narrative. We shall merely mention them. After establishing the fact that certain Christian sects used to offer Eucharist with bread and water, A. Harnack concludes that the meaning of the institution is to be sought not in the food composing it, but in the very Supper itself. The Savior wished to sanctify the

§ III.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER OF ST. JOHN'S GOSPEL.

Historical Value. — The sixth chapter of St. John's Gospel is divided into three parts. The first contains the narrative of the facts preceding the discourse; the second, the discourse; while the third describes the effects produced upon the bystanders. Are these facts, both antecedent and consequent to the discourse, as well as the discourse itself, historical? They are, if the narrator has drawn upon his own remembrance of the facts to which he was a witness, or has borrowed from trustworthy tradition, in order to relate just what our Savior said and in what circumstances He spoke.

Two Solutions. — In the opinion of Loisy, neither the facts nor the discourse contained in this chapter are histo-

---

common repast taken in memory of Him. It is as though He said to His disciples : each time you eat together in memory of me, I shall be in the midst of you to wash away your sins. Cf. *Brot und Wasser. die Eucharistischen Elemente bei Justin*, in *Texte und Untersuchungen*, t. VII, 2, pp. 115-144, Leipzig, 1891. To J. Hoffmann, the last supper was but a meal the purpose of which was to establish a moral union between Jesus and His disciples. Cf. *Das Abendmahl im Urchristentum*, Berlin, 1903. According to W. Heitmuller, the words, « This is my body », are a declaration of Jesus to the effect that His person, in the moral sense, (and not His body in the physical sense), will be the bond uniting His disciples after His death. Cf. *Taufe und Abendmahl bei Paulus*, Gottingen, 1904. J. Réville (Cf. *op. cit.*) sees in the last supper only the guarantee of this moral union. According to M. Goguel (Cf. *op. cit.*) Jesus, while in the company of His disciples, realized that His death was near. As was His wont, He took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to His followers, saying : « Eat, this is my body ». Interpreting these words in the light of the surrounding circumstances, Jesus declared to His disciples His readiness to give His life for them, just as He had given them His innermost thoughts, His heart and His labors. Then He blessed the chalice, and passed it to His disciples, saying that He would meet them in the kingdom.

rical. The discourse is an apologetical exposition of Judæo-Alexandrine faith at the beginning of the second century based upon the Eucharistic tradition expressed in the Synoptics, but very broadly interpreted, expounded and even transposed. The author chooses the form of a dialogue between Jesus and the witnesses of the miracle of the multiplication of the loaves, because this literary frame was better suited to his purpose. Likewise, the facts are not historical in this sense at least, that the narrator never really intended to draw from memory or tradition in order to record what Jesus said, or the circumstances in which he spoke. He borrowed from the Synoptics a group of facts of which he did not hesitate to change the order and even the nature. His sole purpose was thus to compose an allegory, as a fitting introduction to his intended discourse [1].

No solution could be more radical. Loisy outlines it, after some protestant theologians [2], but modifies it to such a degree, that it becomes his very own.

Another solution has been advanced by several exegetes, or apologists, each one presenting it with some special characteristics [3].

The account of the facts antecedent to the discourse is held to be historical. The discourse itself represents the teaching of Jesus, but as it was interpreted, explained and developed by the early Christians, or even by the evangelist himself. The way in which this development took

---

1. *Autour d'un petit livre*, p. 63 : « The accounts of John, far from constituting a history are a mystical contemplation of the Gospel: his discourses are theological meditations on the mystery of salvation. » *Le quatrième Évangile, Introd.*, § III; *Commentaire*, pp. 204-482.

2. H.-J. Holtzmann, *Neutestamentliche Theologie*, t. II, p. 499, Freiburg and Leipzig, 1897. — J. Réville, *Les origines de l'Eucharistie*, p. 58, Paris, 1908.

3. Th. Calmes, *L'Évangile selon saint Jean, Introduct.*, pp. 73-74; *Commentaire*, § XIII, pp. 239-262. — P. Batiffol, *Études d'Histoire et de Théologie positive*, 2[d] series, *L'Eucharistie* [1], pp. 83-106.

place is the following. After the multiplication of the loaves, the Jews recognized in Jesus the national Messias, and straightway wished to proclaim Him king. It was then that Jesus ordered His disciples to embark and pass over before Him to the other side of the lake. Meanwhile, He dismissed the crowd, telling them that they erred when they sought Him as a national Messias, the forerunner of merely material blessings. On this incident the evangelist has built up a whole discourse in which he reproduces and develops the words that the Savior might have pronounced on this occasion as well as those spoken on the same subject elsewhere. The main idea of the discourse is to show that the Savior is not an earthly Messias who will shower temporal favours on the Jews, but the Messias-God, holding in His hands the gifts of salvation. He is the Life which gives life, the Light which enlightens, the Bread, living and lifegiving, come down from heaven.

The discourse contained in the sixth chapter is then above all Christological. In it we find very naturally both the doctrine of salvation through the immolation of the bread of life, or the incarnate Word, and the doctrine of the Eucharist, as a memorial of Christ's passion. Hence, the evangelist concludes this discourse with the development of these two subjects, though only the substance of this teaching can be said to have come from the Savior.

According to this new viewpoint, the discourse contains the words of our divine Master, and likewise the development they have undergone in the minds of the early Christians, and the evangelist himself. Only in as much as this discourse reproduces the Savior's words is it historical. The commentary in wich it is clothed expresses the faith of the first Christian generation.

Criticism of the First Solution. — We shall first set forth a few of the reasons which Loisy alleges in justification of his theory. The discourses of the fourth gospel, and that of

chapter VI especially, he says, are so superior, in tone and thought, to those of the Synoptics that they cannot belong to the teaching of Jesus. The Savior spoke either what is related in the Synoptics or what is contained in the gospel of St. John. He could not be and is not the author of both[1].

Moreover the style of the author of the sixth chapter betrays a complete disregard for history. The account is full of inconsistencies or in many points is at variance with the Synoptics. In ℣. 3, the miracle of the multiplication of the loaves is said to have happened on the mountain. Further on, in ℣. 15, we read that Jesus, after performing the miracle, retired to the mountain, in order to escape the crowd, who wished to make Him king. Now this detail does not harmonize with the geography of the place. There is no higher elevation than the plateau whereon the repast took place. If we insist on taking the gospel account as history, we must here admit the existence of an error. Moreover, as regards this same incident, Loisy points out that St. John contradicts St. Mark and St. Matthew, who place the miracle of the multiplication of the loaves on the shore of the lake[2].

Further on, Loisy finds other similar contradictions. According to Matthew and Mark, he says, the disciples see Jesus walking on the water; Jesus enters the boat, the tempest is calmed, and the voyage ends safely. Now, this incident is told in an entirely different manner by St. John. Jesus does not enter the bark, or rather just as the Apostles were about to receive him into the boat, they found themselves at their destination. John, according to Loisy, intentionally shortens the narrative in order to show that the incarnate Word, who was about to foretell the giving of His flesh as food and His blood as drink, was independent

1. *Simples réflexions*, p. 153.
2. *Le quatrième Evangile*, p. 430.

of the laws of matter, of extension and gravitation[1].

Like Holtzmann, Loisy is curious to know how five thousand people, fed by the miracle of the multiplication of the loaves, could be brought *via* the sea from the eastern to the western shore of the lake. He points in ℣. 25 to the fact that the crowd is supposed to have found Jesus on the seashore, while in ℣. 59, the people are spoken of as having already discovered Jesus speaking in the synagogue at Capharnaum. To his way of thinking, this is but another illustration of inconsistency[2].

It is plain that Loisy detects incoherencies or contradictions a bit too easily. After the multiplication of the loaves, we read in ℣. 15, that Jesus retired again into the mountain, a fact which supposes that He had already descended, upon seeing the crowd, into the desert place of which the Synoptics speak.

Loisy is also anxious to see a contradiction in the fact that St. John places the miracle of the multiplication of the loaves upon the mountain, whereas St. Mark and St. Matthew relate its occurrence on the shore of the lake. A glance at the texts mentioned clearly reveals that the miracle was performed in a desert place, not far from the lake[3].

The second so called contradiction mentioned by Loisy is disposed of in the same easy way. According to St. Matthew and St. Mark, Jesus enters the boat, the tempest is calmed, and the journey is ended in safety. The selfsame fact, though in a less detailed way, is related by St. John. When once convinced of the identity of Jesus, who came to them walking on the waters, the apostles, he says, hastened to welcome Him into the boat. There is no doubt that Jesus entered therein, neither was there any need of an

1. *Le quatrième Evangile,* p. 436.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 438.
3. Cf. Matt., xiv, 13. — Mark, vi, 32.

explicit statement of the evangelist regarding this fact. The journey to the other side was effected rapidly without mishap, probably because, as St. John and the other two evangelists tell us, Jesus had calmed the tempest.

The evangelist, says Loisy, does not think of explaining how sufficient boats could be obtained to transport five thousand persons. We need not ask, he says, how many boats there were, nor how those who manned them could decide upon taking so many passengers and bring them to the other shore. But, nowhere do we read in the narrative that the five thousand crossed the lake. Everything indicates that when evening was come the crowd dispersed, and only the most courageous remained.

It is also clear enough that there is no contradiction in regard to the place of meeting of Jesus and the people.

It is true that some render ℣. 25 : « And the crowd found Jesus on the seashore »; but the Greek text merely suggests the idea of beyond, on the other side of the sea, that is, the western shore of the lake where Capharnaum was situated.

This meeting was the occasion of the discourse. It is a question whether Jesus spoke to the Jews in the synagogue of Capharnaum, or to the Jews, as a synagogue, that is, gathered in solemn assembly, and presided over by the ancients of the people. Our ℣. 59 is patient of both interpretations.

Consequently all of Loisy's findings are only apparent and not real inconsistencies or contradictions. They are easily accounted for, and in no way weaken the historical value of the narrative. In fact, if the sole purpose of the evangelist had been to symbolize the Eucharist, as Loisy would have us believe, then assuredly his work would be full of inconsistencies. For, as Mgr. Batiffol has remarked, the symbolism of the supposed to be facts is very elusive[1].

---

1. P. Batiffol. *Études d'Histoire et de Théologie positive,* 2[1] series, *L'Eucharistie*[1], pp. 83-88.

On what ground does Loisy deny the historical character of the discourse? The discourses in St. John contain a doctrine far superior to the doctrine contained in the discourses related by the Synoptics. Still there are a great number of texts in the Synoptics which teach a doctrine almost as sublime as that of the fourth gropel. Of course Loisy declares that these are interpolations belonging in reality to the Johannine teaching. Thus does he interpret the following passage of St. Matthew, « No one knoweth the Son, but the Father ; neither doth anyone know the Father but the Son, and he to whom it shall please the Son to reveal him ». Yet, why should this not have been really a part of the teaching of Jesus? It is only because this fact would be at variance with Loisy's pet ideas concerning the historical personality of Jesus. It is precisely this altogether gratuitous affirmation that is inacceptable.

Criticism of the Second Solution. — We must carefully distinguish this new solution from that of Loisy. Its defenders acknowledge without any hesitation whatsoever, the historical character of the facts both antecedent (prior) and consequent (posterior) to the discourse; and consequently they have to admit that the discourse itself possesses some historical worth. In as much as it is historical it represents the teaching of Jesus; this is true especially of two doctrines : the salvation of the world through the immolation of the bread of life or the incarnate Word, and the doctrine of the Eucharist as a memorial of Christ's passion.

This theory born of the laudable desire to harmonize the discourses of the fourth gospel with those of the first three, is open to serious difficulties. In the first place it is very complex and involved. The facts set down as introductory to the discourse are admitted to have really happened. The discourse too, we are told, is partly historical; but perhaps the facts are not related to the discourse. In the discourse itself we have to distinguish what is historical

from the developments added by the evangelist. Such a work is beset with many difficulties, and exposes one to rather arbitrary discriminations. Besides, the evangelist places on the lips of our Savior both the words which the Lord might have spoken, and also the explanation — most likely very important, which was never given by Our Lord, — truly a strange procedure for a writer who calls himself a witness.

A Third Solution. — All objections vanish when both the introductory facts and the discourse itself are admitted to be historical. This however, does not prevent us from holding that St. John, the author of the fourth gospel, adapted somewhat the discourse of our Lord; he might have, v. g., emphasized certain points, so as to make it a defence of the doctrine against those who misinterpreted the Eucharist; or since he was talking to Christians, who were initiated to the sacred mysteries, he might have touched more ligthly over some other points. It is possible that St. John, following the method of the ancient historians, gathered into one large discourse, several sermons of our Savior concerning the bread of life, and the Eucharist. With much greater assurance can we say that the Apostle has clothed the teaching of the Savior with his own characteristic literary style. Thus while truly historical in recording the words of the Savior, the sixth chapter manifests throughout the personal touch of the narrator.

This solution has in its favor its extreme simplicity. It explains all the peculiarities of the fourth gospel, while depriving it of none of the importance with which Catholic tradition has always surrounded it. The same explanation can be given with regard to the composition of this writing as was given with regard to that of the three other gospels.

Why, it may be asked, is the discourse of Our Lord, containing the promise of the Eucharist not mentioned in the first three gospels, and why are this discourse and all

those contained in the last gospel, far superior in thought and tone to the Synoptic doctrine. We must first of all remember that there are, in the Synoptics, traces of the Johannine discourses which are truly historical[1]. On the other hand the transcendency of St. John's doctrine can be sufficiently accounted for by the intimate relations which existed between the Apostle and Our Lord, and by the fact, already mentioned, that the Apostle was speaking to initiated Christians, and could therefore teach a higher doctrine than the ordinary catechetical teaching.

§ IV.

Criticism of a few of the Rationalistic Theories.

Rationalistic Theories. — The rationalists having rejected the historical fact of the institution of the Eucharist, had to explain how it happened that, in the absence of such an institution by Christ, the Eucharist was celebrated in the early Church. Many attempts have been made to explain it. Some would see in the Eucharist a rite borrowed from paganism. To another, the Eucharist was gradually evolved in the first Christian communities and received from St. Paul its final form. A third claims that the Eucharist is merely a product of St. Paul's faith.

The Eucharist was not borrowed from paganism. — It was customary in the pagan world for the relatives and friends of the dead to place provisions beside the corpse, for its use in the land beyond the grave. Gradually this funeral meal ceased to be exclusively for the benefit of the dead and became a family banquet in memory of the dead.

---

1. Cf. E. Levesque, *Nos Quatre Évangiles*, ch. III, Paris, 1917.

Santa Barbara, California

There also existed in the greco-roman society a large number of fraternities whose members gathered together on certain days, and partook in common of a friendly repast. Each one brought his own share of the banquet and the repast began to be known as the « agape », δεῖπνα ἀγαπητικά. These societies had indeed been proscribed by Augustus, unless they were formed exclusively for the purpose of procuring decent burial to their associates. Nevertheless they were widely spread throughout the empire, at times tolerated, at times established as regular funeral associations, or sometimes disguised as such.

These practices possessed something in common with the Eucharistic liturgy as celebrated in the early ages of Christianity. Hence, the Eucharist has been often unjustly branded as a modification of a pagan rite [1].

The celebration of the Eucharist and the funeral banquets so much in vogue both among the pagans and the Jews, do admit of comparison. At the last supper, the Savior had commanded His disciples to renew the Eucharist in memory of Him. While relating the words of the institution, St. Paul adds : « For as often as you shall eat this bread or drink the chalice, you shall show the death of the Lord until He come. » These are however the only similarities. The funeral repast of the pagans was but a banquet offered to the dead or in his honour, whereas the Eucharist was first of all a religious ceremony after the pattern of the last supper, the principal object of which was the partaking of the body and blood of the Lord.

---

1. J. Réville, *Les premières communautés pauliniennes ont-elles été des éranes ou des synagogues ?* in *Origines de l'épiscopat*, pp. 180-190, Paris 1914. — R. Reitzenstein, *Die hellenistichen Mysterien religionen*, pp. 50-51, Leipzig and Berlin, 1910. Loisy promises to treat of the theory again and make it his own. Cf. *Les mystères païens et le mystère chrétien, Rev. d'Hist et de Littér. rel.*, Jan.-Feb. 1913. This it is undoubtedly which caused M. Mangenot to set forth and criticize the ideas of Reitzenstein, *Saint Paul et les mystères païens*, *Rev. du clergé franç.*, April 1st., 1913.

It is likewise certain that the repasts of the pagan confraternities, funeral or otherwise, possessed some resemblance to the Eucharist. The early Christians had even formed themselves into funeral confraternities, in order to celebrate the holy mysteries without State interference. The name « agape » which had become attached to the Eucharistic celebration, was the distinctive title of the repasts of the pagan fraternities, and most likely many of the first converts to Christianity were former members of these fraternities. It is in the light of these facts, that we must explain St. Paul's denuntiation of abuses found in the first epistle to the Corinthians. Some new converts might have tried to introduce into the Christian banquets the disorder and excesses, that were prevalent in the banquets of the pagan fraternities. Outside of this, the Eucharistic supper is entirely different both in its origin and in its constitution. The pagan repasts were essentially profane, they were friendly meals taken in common; the Eucharist was exclusively a religious ceremony. It could be traced back to the eve of the Savior's death, when He had celebrated the Jewish pasch together with His disciples. Towards the end of the meal, He had turned aside from the strict Jewish ritual, and had given them His body to eat and His blood to drink under the appearances of bread and wine, the wine which had filled the fourth chalice. He had commanded His Apostles to do exactly what He had done, when He would be no longer with them. Now, in celebrating the agape, the early Christians intended merely to obey the command of the Lord. The change introduced at the end of the paschal feast by Christ, had divided the meal into two distinct parts, the first of which was preparatory to the second. Yet the early Christians were not so anxious to keep on using the same symbolical foods, which indeed were soon replaced by others, as they were to maintain the entire and complete formula of prayers used by Christ. The Eucharist or Christian agape was thus

made up of two parts : a common meal, followed by the Eucharistic communion. The repast was not to be begun until all the faithful had gathered, and had been supplied with sufficient food. Each one was to bring his own portion, although the poorer Christians naturally shared in the bounty of the richer. Otherwise, if the meal began before all were served, some would have too much, while others would be without anything. After the meal was over, the Eucharistic supper began, which indeed was the chief and ultimate object of the gathering [1].

The Eucharist is not merely the product of evolution among the first Christian communities. — From the very beginning, we are told [2], the early Christians were accustomed to gather at a common meal where they exchanged their views and hopes concerning the second advent of Christ. As this failed to be realised, they began to reflect more deeply upon the significance of the last

---

1. Cf. H. Leclercq, art. *Agape*, in *Dict. d'Archéol. et de Liturg.*, t. I, col. 779-792. — F. X. Funk, *L'Agape, Rev. d'hist. eccl.*, 1903. The first part of the agape, or Eucharistic ceremony soon consisted in nothing else than a recitation of liturgical prayers. It is impossible to determine just at what period the banquet element disappeared. P. Batiffol seems to have clearly shown that the texts of the second and third century, though ordinarily referred to the agape or love feast, are in reality a recital of the Eucharistic prayer, the breaking of bread, and the communion. But the learned writer seems to exaggerate when to substantiate his thesis that the agape or love feast did not exist in the beginning of Christianity, he interprets I Cor., xi, 17-22, as though St. Paul had intended to forbid altogether the meal taken by the faithful of Corinth before communion. St. Paul protests against the abuses of this feast; he does not, however, suppress it. In the third century, the name of agape was given to the collection made at the end of the Eucharistic ceremony, the proceeds of which went to support the poor, the orphans, and the imprisoned martyrs. In the fourth century throughout Africa and Italy, we read that certain Christians distributed alms upon the death of their parents, and even gave some repasts near the tomb of their dead. St. Ambrose and St. Augustine denounced these practices, as being too much like the funeral banquets of the pagans. See P. Batiffol, *Études d'Hist. et de Théol. posit.*, first series, *L'Agape*, pp. 283-325.

2. J. Hoffmann, *op. cit.*, pp. 94-123.

supper which the Master had eaten with his disciples. Thus far they had seen in it but a token of moral union between Jesus and his Apostles. In a more enlightened aftermath, it dawned on them that this feast had been the symbol of Christ's death. Quite naturally, then, this last meal of Christ became connected, in their minds, with the common meals taken by the early Christians and from, this time forth, the latter were looked upon as the symbol of Christ's death. It was next pointed out that Christ was the Servant of Yahweh, described in the fifty third chapter of Isaias. Through his death, it was concluded, he had become the Savior of men. In this way the repast of the first Christians was interpreted as a rite of thanksgiving made to Christ for his acceptance of death, and for the consequent redemption of the world. At this juncture, Paul began to preach. In the course of his ministry, he made a synthesis of all the leading ideas of his time. To him Christ's death was first of all the sacrifice which redeemed mankind, but which was to be renewed until the end of time. On the other hand his faith originated the conception that Christ mysteriously present in His Church was none the less present in the banquet of the first Christians, that he was present under the appearances of bread and wine, and in the state of an immolated victim. Paul believed that Christ himself had instituted this sacrifice at the last supper before his death, and he interpreted it as a Eucharistic sacrifice agreeably with his view of Redemption through sacrifice. The institution of the Eucharist, therefore, is merely the last stage of development of a rite, the humble starting point of which is found in those common banquets of the early Christians, wherein mutual hopes and desires of the second coming of Christ were exchanged.

The author of this startling synthesis does not take the trouble of quoting a single fact or a single text to substantiate his position. Possibly he intended merely to indulge in a historical hypothesis : but he should at least have imagined

a hypothesis vested with some degree of probability, whereas it is lacking even in this. In the first place, modern critics admit that the first epistle to the Corinthians was written about the year 57. Therein we read that St. Paul reproves the Corinthians for the abuses they introduced in the celebration of the Eucharist. Consequently, the Apostle must have taught them the Eucharistic rite in the year 52 or 53 when he founded the Church at Corinth. Since St. Paul already believed in the doctrine at this date, it follows that the entire evolutionary process, described by the above critic, was perfected within twenty years. Jesus, we are asked to believe, had dined with His disciples for the sole purpose of drawing them closer to Him. Some twenty years later, however, it had become the common teaching that Jesus in that last supper had first rendered Himself present under the appearances of bread and wine, and given Himself as such to His Apostles; that He had offered the sacrifice of a new covenant, and commanded the repetition of the ceremony in memory of His death. Furthermore we are supposed to believe that the Savior's disciples whose fidelity in transmitting the teaching and actions of Christ, and whose reluctance to abandon the abrogated Jewish rites are so well known, became the preachers of such doctrine, transforming the words they heard, and altering the deeds performed before their eyes. Such a hypothesis is most unlikely. Of course St. Paul is said to be the prime mover of this revolution. Besides the difficulty of explaining how the Apostle could have consciously or unconsciously changed the character of the last supper from a mere friendly meal into the sacrifice of a new covenant, it is still more difficult to explain how he could have succeeded in imposing his view on the early Christians and chiefly on the very disciples of the Savior[1].

---

1. Cf. Ch. Ruch, art. *Eucharistie d'après la sainte Écriture,* in *Dict. de Théol. cath.*, t. V, col. 1105-1109.

The Eucharist did not arise from the faith of St. Paul. — Such is the startling conclusion reached by Loisy, who sees in the last supper but an ordinary meal, perhaps the paschal feast, during which Jesus distributed bread and wine to his disciples as he had so often done before. There was no mention of his body and blood, but feeling that the end was near, Jesus declared that he would neither eat nor drink with his disciples again, until they had entered into the kingdom he had appointed for them. It is practically impossible to explain exactly how the Christian sacrament can be traced to the words of Christ. From the accounts of the last supper the early idea of the Eucharist appears to be intimately connected with the faith in the risen Christ. Jesus had become the Christ in the glory of the kingdom, and yet he was still present with his disciples, especially, when with him and in memory of him, they gathered together for the common meal.

Lifted up by the working of the new faith within him, which day by day revealed greater and vaster mysteries to his soul, the Apostle Paul discovered the meaning of the Eucharistic repast. He had come to consider Christ's death in the light of a sacrifice offered for the sins of men. In the Eucharistic meal he saw the memorial of Christ's passion and the continuance of his bloody sacrifice. It appeared to him that Christ had instituted this Eucharistic meal, when on the eve of his death he broke bread with his disciples, and commanded them to repeat the ceremony, until his return, when he would gather all things unto his heavenly Father[1].

According to Loisy therefore, St. Paul's teaching is not that of Christ, but is the creation of Paul's own faith, or in other words, it is the result of his religious thought or the

---

1. A. Loisy, *Les Evangiles synoptiques*, t. II, pp. 534-544. — *Autour d'un petit livre*, p. 236, Paris, 1903.

effort of his intellect in trying to discover the meaning of the last supper[1].

Having taught, during his life on earth, nothing more than the coming of that earthly and material kingdom so heralded by the Pharisees and popularized in Israel, Jesus could see himself in no other guise than that of the Jewish Messias, who was soon to return in glory and confound His enemies. In the same way, during the last supper he could allude to his near return in the glorious Kingdom. Faith in his resurrection, however, exalted him in the hearts of his disciples. He became for them the true Son of God; his death, the atoning sacrifice for the sins of men; his last meal with them, the anticipatory sacrifice of the new covenant, the harbinger of his death, which must be renewed in memory of his passion, and in continuance of the sacrifice of the cross until the end of time. Here Loisy introduces one of his most fanciful whimsicalities. This entire body of transcendent truths, he adds, which faith alone has in some way drawn from the words and actions of the Savior cannot be accepted in the same sense as ordinary historical knowledge. It is only faith that can speak of the Savior's resurrection, and discover the redeeming character of the crucifixion, and the sacrificial value of the last supper. Neither the historian nor the critic has any right in this realm which belongs solely to the jurisdiction of faith.

It was necessary to give the above detailed explanation, to get a clear grasp of the two leading ideas of Loisy's theology. According to him, Christ's teaching was limited to an announcement of the eschatological kingdom, and consequently he could not have instituted the Eucharist, the latter being a product of Christian faith, and, in particular, the faith of St. Paul.

---

1. This is what Loisy means by faith or the supernatural. See, *Autour d'un petit livre*, p. 189; — *Les Évangiles synoptiques*, introd., p. 253; — *Quelques lettres sur les questions actuelles.*

An attentive reading of the gospel shows clearly that Christ was preaching the advent of a spiritual kingdom. He never ceased to refute the Pharisees, those dreamers of an earthly kingdom; and for what He taught, Christ suffered and died. Sometimes, undoubtedly, His teaching is garbed in strange terms. He seems to speak as though the coming of the kingdom was very near. In some cases, His eschatology might not seem to differ from that of the leading Jews of His day. The fault is with our perspective: we place on the same plane teachings in which Our Savior refers to different times. The kingdom He preaches is an inward kingdom, whose gates are won by penance and faith. When the gospel spreads the kingdom grows. It produces its fruit as the seed that pushes its way through the earth, silently, step by step.

In order to draw men into the kingdom of God, the Savior foretells to them the calamities that are impending. His method has been followed by all other preachers of the Gospel. What are these calamities? First of all there is death, awaiting the individual at every turn of the road, and every moment of the night and day, and threatening to cast him at the feet of his Sovereign Judge. Next comes the destruction of Jerusalem, which really came to pass, and which, in the extent of its ruin, surpassed perhaps all that had the Pharisees had ever heard on conceived as indicating the advent of the Messias. Finally there is the end of the world we are still awaiting. When the gospel is read in the light of these clear principles, all the manifold difficulties of Loisy vanish. It seems strange that historians, and Loisy in particular, would not, in a truly critical way apply their principle of perspective to explain the difficulties of the Gospel, they do as to remove the obscurities of an ancient text.

Again every doctrine that exalts Our Lord above the common run of mankind, is attributed by Loisy to the early disciples and St. Paul. It was St. Paul, in particular,

who discovered, through his faith, the profound meaning of the last supper.

If we admit the conclusion of Loisy, there are only two ways of interpreting the facts. Either the faith of St. Paul and the early Christians corresponded to a real object, which, though distinct from the object of history, consisted in the true presence of Christ under the Eucharistic species, in His divine nature, and in the redeeming character of His death, or else their faith lacked real object and possessed a mere subjective religious value.

The first interpretation forces us to acknowledge that Christ was God without knowing it, and that consequently this could not be part of His teaching; that He redeemed the world, founded His church, and instituted the Eucharist, all unwittingly. How could such a one be Our Lord? According to this hypothesis, it was St. Paul who discovered the hidden grandeur of Jesus and His work. But why refuse to Jesus that which is so generously granted to St. Paul?

To admit the second interpretation, viz., that the disciples' faith was without foundation, and possessed only a subjective religious value, is to fall into a far more radical conclusion. The faith here in question is merely a matter of sentiment and imagination. It is a kind of mystical religious exaltation, destined to be moulded and transformed by all the successive changes of the human mind. Its worth is in the moral activity that it may promote, not in the accompanying intellectual image, which arises, as it were, from its own depths. Briefly, its value is dynamic, vital, not scientific. Such a conclusion is a subterfuge. We are told that in New Testament history, we must carefully distinguish fact from faith, and that when all things are weighed, faith — and very little do they mean by it — is the more important.

Conclusion. — The numerous attempts to explain the origin of the Eucharist without Christ, or by attributing to

Him only some unconscious word or action, which was later misunderstood by His disciples, are all due to a biased method of interpretation. All the varied syntheses mentioned are alike in their purpose. In Calvin's time, grammatical analysis was forced into the denial of the doctrine of the real presence. Nowadays, historical criticism has taken its place. In fact, the main inspiration of these false systems is the same, the latter, however, having become more outspoken and more radical than the former : Christ cannot be present in the Eucharist, because He is not the God-man. *To bring out that radical negation evinces the falsehood of those biased theories.* For us Christ is the author of the Eucharist as of all the other Sacraments, as defined by the Council of Trent [1].

---

1. Denz., 844 : *Si quis dixerit, sacramenta novæ legis non fuisse omnia a Jesu Christo Domino nostro instituta.... A. S.*

CHAPTER II.

THE REAL PRESENCE.

After having established the fact that the Eucharist was instituted by Christ, we must next consider the object of that institution, namely, the real presence of the Savior under the appearances of bread and wine.

The Council of Trent has defined this doctrine as follows : « If any one denies that the body and blood, soul and divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ, and consequently Jesus Christ in His entirety, is contained truly, really, and substantially in the sacrament of the most holy Eucharist ; and if, on the contrary, it is said that He is contained therein merely as in a sign or figure, or by some mysterious energy emanating from His body : let him be anathema [1]. »

Hence, the Eucharist does not merely signify the body and blood of Christ, as Zwingli held. It is not the figure of Christ on the cross, nor the symbol of Christ's bloody sacrifice on Calvary, in the words of OEcolampadius. The Eucharist is not the visible expression of some power coming from the glorified body of Christ, and entering into the souls of the faithful, through communion, as Calvin taught. Accord-

---

1. Denz., 883 : *Si quis negaverit in sanctissimæ eucharistiæ sacramento contineri vere, realiter et substantialiter corpus et sanguinem una cum anima et divinitate Domini Nostri Jesu Christi, ac proinde totum Christum ; sed dixerit tantummodo esse in eo ut in signo, vel figura, aut virtute : A. S.*

ing to the Fathers of the Council, who condemned each one of the above errors, Christ is truly, really, and substantially contained in the Eucharist. His presence is true, and hence not in the manner of a sign; real, and hence, not as a symbol; substantial, and therefore not by reason of some energy proceeding from His glorified body in heaven. Moreover, in the words of the Fathers, He is entirely present, both in His divinity, as the eternal Word of the Father, and in His humanity.

This is the strict Catholic dogma, and every word of its exposition is essential. The omission or transformation of any would lay the formula open to inexactness or error.

Above all, this doctrine is unequivocally true, based upon the *teaching of the New Testament*, the testimony of *Tradition*, and the *definition of the real presence* made by the Council of Trent again Protestant symbolism.

ARTICLE I.

The New Testament.

General Idea. — The New Testament records, first of all, the *promise* of the Eucharist by Christ, and then its *institution* on the eve of His death. The Epistles of St. Paul also contain some important remarks concerning the *celebration of the Eucharist.*

The Promise of the Eucharist. — Inspired by the allegorical interpretation of Clement of Alexandria, Origen and St. Augustine, several sixteenth century theologians maintained that in the sixth chapter of St. John, Christ spoke of the bread of life in metaphor, that is, to signify the gift He was to give them on the cross, and the need they had of uniting themselves with Him through faith [1].

1. See CAJETAN, *In III am Partem*, q. LXXIX, a. 1-4.

The Council of Trent refused to settle the controversy [1].

In our day exegesis has taken another direction. Many Protestant critics say it is question of the Eucharist in the whole discourse, and even in the events preceding the discourse, although they interpret the whole in a spiritual sense [2].

In the opinion of Loisy, the entire sixth chapter including the accounts of the multiplication of the loaves and the miraculous crossing of the lake, has reference to the Eucharist [3].

Some Catholic commentators are of the opinion that Christ first required His disciples to believe in Him (℣℣ 26-48), and then declared that they should receive His body and blood (℣℣ 48-59). Belief in the incarnate Word is the necessary prelude to sacramental communion. To share in eternal life, our mortal body must feed on the life-giving flesh of Christ. Without that union life is not in us, and we shall not be raised on the last day. The Savior thus enjoins two obligations upon us, the first of which is a preparation for the second. The unity of the discourse is perfect [4].

According to Batiffol, the discourse on union with Christ through faith extends to ℣ 51[b]. The latter verse forms a short transition, in which Christ says that He will give Himself that men may live, just before He declares that He will more-

---

1. Sess. XXI; c. I. Cf. F. Cavallera, *L'interprétation du chapitre VI de saint Jean. Une controverse exégétique au concile de Trente*, in the *Rev. d'Hist. eccl.*, t. X, pp. 687-709.

2. J. Réville, *Les origines de l'Eucharistie*, p. 58. — M. Goguel, *L'Eucharistie, des origines à Justin martyr*, p. 204. — H.-J. Holtzmann, *Lehrbuch der neutestamentlichen Theologie*, t. II, p. 499.

3. See above, pp. 193-194.

4. N. Wiseman, *Lectures on the real presence. Lecture I.* — J. Lebreton, art. *Eucharistie*, in *Dict. apol. de la Foi cath.*, t. I, col. 1559-1562. — C. Ruch, art. *Eucharistie*, in *Dict. de Théol. cath.*, t. V, col. 993-995.

over give Himself in the Eucharist as their food. So Christ speaks of the Eucharist only in ℣℣ 53-56 (1).

These last verses are indeed very significant. Jesus has just declared that He is the living bread come down from heaven; that it is necessary to eat this bread to have life everlasting; and that this bread is His flesh. Understanding this last expression in a literal sense, the bystanders ask, « How can this man give us His flesh to eat? » Far from declaring, as was His wont, that His words are to be taken only in a figurative sense, the Savior repeats them again and again : « Amen, amen I say unto you : except you eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink His blood you shall not have life in you. » In the language of the Old and New Testaments, as in all semitic languages, the expression, *to eat the flesh of anyone,* when used metaphorically, signifies to insult, to calumniate. [2]. If, then, the saying were purely metaphorical in the minds of our Savior's contemporaries, only this figurative meaning can be assigned to the words of Our Lord, granting, of course, that the literal meaning

---

1. *Études d'Histoire et de Théologie positive*, 2nd. series, *L'Eucharistie* [1], pp. 94-100.

2. Examples of this can be found in the Old Testament. See *Job*, XIX, 22. — *Ps.* XXVII (Hebrew), 2. — *Mich.*, III, 3. — *Eccl.*, IV, 5. St. Paul uses the same expression : « But if you bite and devour one another, take heed you be not consumed one of another. » *Gal.* V, 15. Note also HENOCH, VII, 5. In Aramaic, Syriac, and Arabic, « *to eat the flesh of anyone* » is to speak ill of that person and falsely to accuse him of something. See N. WISEMAN, *Lectures on real presence*, lect. II. It will be objected that Jesus sufficiently indicated He was speaking in figures when upon the murmuring of His disciples, He said (℣. 63) : « It is the spirit that quickeneth : the flesh profiteth nothing. » If, however, these words were to be taken in a metaphorical sense, the disciples assuredly should have been content, and no motives can be alleged for their withdrawal from Christ, a fact which is mentioned in ℣. 66. The difficulty is very easily cleared up by Wiseman, who remarks that in Holy Writ, the word *flesh* very often refers to the impulses of our lower nature, while the *spirit* is grace and divine aid. His explanation of ℣. 63 is as follows : « Human intelligence alone, in the words of Our Saviour, cannot believe in my word; my teaching is divine and requires the spirit, that is, the help of my Father or supernatural faith. » Cf. lect. IV.

were excluded. In that event, Christ teaches that to obtain eternal life, either His flesh must be really eaten, or He must be calumniated. Can there be any doubt as to which interpretation must be accepted?

It seems more reasonable to admit that all this doctrine is contained in ℣ 51ᵇ, which Batiffol interprets as a mere allusion to the passion of the incarnate Word. When Christ spoke these words : « And the bread which I will give is my flesh for the life of the world », the Jews clearly understood them as referring to something else than a material bread, or even His heavenly origin, and consequently realized that He intended to give them His flesh to eat. Taken in themselves the words could not be clearer. If, on the other hand, we compare them with what Jesus said at the last supper, we notice a striking resemblance between the two sentences. On the eve of His death, He said over the bread : « This is my body which is given for you »; and over the wine : « This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you. » Verse 51ᵇ, then, is a sketch, as it were, of the Eucharistic supper. The Savior speaks of the gift of His flesh as a preliminary to the sacrifice of the covenant, and the whole passage refers both to the Eucharistic sacrifice and to the sacrifice of the cross.

It seems also that the Eucharist is the theme not merely of ℣℣. 48-51, but of the entire first part of the discourse, from ℣℣. 26-27. In ℣℣. 26-27, Christ contrasts the material bread He had given them the day before, with a mysterious food that *He is going to give them*. The latter certainly cannot be understood as the Gospel or faith, for these had been given to them long ago. Even the Samaritans had received them. Consequently the Savior is speaking of the Eucharist. It is true that after ℣℣. 26-27, we find a rather condensed dialogue, in which the words of Our Savior have two meanings. In ℣℣. 28-47 He calls Himself the living bread come down from heaven, to give eternal life, and says that in order to obtain that life we must have faith in Him.

It was the interruptions of the Jews that caused Him to speak of faith in His divine person; yet He does not totally cease to consider Himself as the bread of the Eucharist as can be seen from His constant use of the metaphor of the bread of life.

To sum up: the whole discourse of the sixth chapter treats of the eating of Christ's flesh. This doctrine is stated in the very beginning, and developed with more and more precision. Owing to the objections of the Jews, Our Savior has indeed to restate more elementary truths; but He never quite ceases to speak of Himself as the living bread. Once He has removed the doubts of His audience, He returns to the doctrine of the Eucharistic bread, which He asserts over and over again, must be eaten if we would have life. It should not have been hard for the Jews to believe the words spoken by Our Lord on this occasion, for their minds had already been prepared to receive them literally, by the preceding miracle of the multiplication of the loaves.

The Accounts of the Institution. — According to the accounts of the three Synoptists and of St. Paul, Christ instituted the Eucharist at the last supper, the night before His death. The Synoptics identify this supper with the paschal meal of the Jews[1].

---

1. The first three Gospels seem to identify the last supper with the pasch of the Jews, which was held on the evening of the fifteenth of Nisan. See MATTH., XXVI, 17. — MARK, XIV, 12. — LUKE., XXII, 17. St. John, on the contrary, claims that Jesus was condemned about the sixth hour of the day of preparation for the Pasch (about noon). See JOHN, XIV, 14. The Eucharist was instituted the evening before at what he calls a supper. See *ibid.* XIII, 2. Hence, according to the Synoptics, Jesus was put to death the fifteenth of Nisan; according to St. John, on the fourteenth of that month. Then, according to the Synoptics, the last supper took place on the evening of the fifteenth of Nisan, and according to St. John on the evening of the fourteenth. It was thought possible to solve this difficulty by saying that Jesus did not institute the Eucharist when celebrating the Pasch properly so called, but during the meal which the Jews took on the eve of every Sabbath, as well as on the eve of the Pasch, and which was called the *Kiddûsch*. See P. BATIFFOL, *L'Eucharistie*[3], pp. 43-44. This interpretation does not agree with the Synoptists who expressly speak of the Lord's supper as the Pasch. If however the Savior instituted the Eucha-

A glance at the *Jewish paschal rite* of that time will bring out into clearer relief *the meaning of the institution of the Eucharist by the Savior*. Because of their importance the *formulæ of the consecration of the bread and wine* will be examined by themselves. It will then be easy to deduce the *doctrine of the real presence* from the accounts we have of the institution.

The Jewish Paschal Rite in the time of Our Lord. — Fortunately we are able to obtain a fair idea of the nature of this Jewish rite[1].

In the first place it was a familly affair and was presided over by the father. The members of the family ranged themselves around the table according to strict rules of prece-

---

rist while celebrating the Pasch, on the evening of the fifteenth, how could St. John place the institution on the evening of the fourteenth?

The solution lies, it seems, in a more thorough examination of the texts of the Synoptists and St. John. Throughout this whole discussion, we must remember that the Jewish days run from evening to evening, and not, as with us, from midnight to midnight. In other words the day was reckoned from about six o'clock of one evening to about six o' clock of the following. On the other hand, the Pasch was always prepared on the fourteenth of the month of Nisan, the first month of the religious year, which began with the vernal equinox. For this reason it was called *the day of the preparation for the Pasch*, or, *the first day of the Azymes*, since from this day unleavened bread was prescribed. The Pasch was eaten at the beginning of the fifteenth of Nisan, that is, on the evening of the fifteenth between six o' clock and midnight. In the light of these Jewish practices, all contradiction between the Synoptists and St. John disappears. St. Luke says, « *the day came, on which it was necessary that the Pasch should be killed* », which was most likely the beginning of the fourteenth of Nisan, in other words the evening from which that day was reckoned. Consequently, it was the eve of the feast of the Pasch, the day of preparation of which St John speaks, or the first day of the Azymes, in the words of St. Matthew and St. Mark. Both the Synoptists and St. John assign therefore the last supper to the early hours of the night which began the fourteenth day of Nisan. Jesus had thus anticipated the Pasch by a day. He instituted the Eucharist on the eve of the day when the Jews partook of the paschal meal. Cf. J. Bruneau, *Learning from St. John how to read the Synoptists. Ecclesiastical Review*. Feb. 1918, pp. 164-167.

1. See P. Batiffol, *Etudes d'Histoire et de Théologie positive*, 2e série, *L'Eucharistie*⁴, pp. 134-135. — E. Le Camus, *The life of Christ*, t. III, pp. 187-191.

dence, then he who presided, taking the cup of wine that was offered to him, arose and pronounced the first benediction as follows : « This day recalls our deliverance, and our departure from the land of Egypt. Blessed be the Lord, the Eternal one, who has created the fruit of the vine. » After drinking of the cup himself, he passed it to the guests, who drank in like manner.

At this moment a basin of water was brought in for the customary purifications, and all washed their hands. Next bitter herbs were eaten, to recall the food eaten in Egypt. Sometimes the herbs were seasoned with a mixture of vinegar and water, at other times with a preparation of vinegar, figs, dates, and almonds, the latter called *Charoseth*. The latter dish, a thick kind of broth, recalled by its color, it was said, the clay which the Hebrews had long ago mixed, and out of which they had built the cities of the Pharaons.

This was followed by the unleavened or unfermented bread. The latter could be made out of wheat, barley, oatmeal, or rye, but never of rice or maize. It was usually made out of wheat-flour, in carefully cleaned vases, and no time was allowed for it to ferment. Round and very flat, it recalled to the Jews the bread of affliction eaten in Egypt, upon the occasion of their sudden flight towards the Red Sea. It was the head of the household who again pronounced the blessing : « Blessed be he who enables the earth to bring forth bread. » Then breaking the bread, for the Jews never cut it, he gave it to his guests.

Finally the paschal lamb was brought in and placed in the middle of the table. The lamb had been slain in the temple towards the end of the day of preparation, about the hour of None, that is, about three o'clock in the afternoon. It had been then roasted on a spit made in the form of a cross from a pomegranate tree[1].

---

1. In this crossed bit of wood, St. Justin sees the cross of Calvary on which hung the true lamb of God. See *Dial.*, XL.

Wine was poured into the cup a second time, and in obedience to the command of Moses, the son of the house asked his father the meaning of the festival[1].

The father then told in detail of the hardships the Jews had suffered in Egypt, and how God had delivered them froms the bonds of slavery. Then he intoned the *Hallel,* which the rest chanted, beginning with the Psalm « Praise the Lord, ye children : praise ye the name of the Lord[2] » and ending with the verse which commemorates the escape from Egypt, and the deliverance of the house of Jacob from the hands of a barbarous people[3].

The paschal lamb was then eaten. A third and a fourth cup of wine were passed around. Psalms of thanksgiving and triumph were chanted. Finally a fifth cup of wine was drunk, and the feast ended with two hymns, which are supposed to have constituted the great *Hallel*[4].

It is evident then that the Jewish Pasch was a commemoration of the Passover of *Yahweh* and of the exodus from Egypt[5], both of which great events had been preliminary to the ancient covenant made by God with His people at the foot of Mt. Sinai[6].

The Institution of the Eucharist by our Savior. — The Evangelists are far more concerned with the Christian aspect of the last supper than with its Jewish aspect. They attribute little importance to the faithfulness with which Christ followed the very letter of the Mosaic law. Their endeavour is to show that while Christ celebrated the Jewish Pasch, He wished to put an end to it forever, and to substitute for it the Christian Pasch.

---

1. *Exod.*, XII., 26-27.
2. *Ps.* CXIII.
3. *Ps.* CXIV-CXV.
4. *Ps.* CXXXV-CXXXVI.
5. *Exod.*, XII.
6. *Exod.*, XIX-XXIV.

It was on the evening, or, according to the Jewish computation, in the opening hours of the day of the preparation of the Pasch, that Jesus sat at table with His disciples. In the words of St. Luke, He then said to them, « With desire I have desired to eat this Pasch with you before I suffer. For I say to you, that from this time I will not eat it till it be fulfilled in the Kingdom of God ». The first cup of wine was then offered. After blessing it and touching the chalice with His lips, Jesus added, « Divide this chalice among you : for I will no longer drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God come[1] ». Thus, it is not merely His last Pasch: it is His last supper.

Before sitting down at table, it was the custom to purify oneself at a common basin. Jesus seizes this opportunity to manifest His supreme love and humility towards His Apostles, and washes their feet[2].

Then, according to St. Matthew, St. Mark and St. John, followed the betrayal by Judas[3].

It was then that Jesus spoke of the nearness of His departure, laid down the new commandment, and foretold

---

1. It has been claimed that the first and second cup mentioned in the narrative of St. Luke, are not really distinct, but are one and the same with the cup consecrated by Christ. The Evangelist is supposed to have had before him two traditional accounts of the last supper. The first must have been the one which appealed to St. Paul, and would consequently have been included in the narrative as the most concise account of the last supper. The second must have contained additional traits, and would therefore appeal to the literary temperament of St. Luke, who placed it as it were, in the margin of the first narrative. Thus the two accounts were combined. See P. Batiffol, *Études d'Hist. et de Théol, posit.*, 2nd series, *L'Eucharistie*[1], pp. 31-33. This solution is no doubt ingenious, but it needlessly confuses a narrative the order of which seems to be intentional as well as historical. See W. Berning, *Die Einsetzung der heiligen Eucharistie in ihrer ursprünglichen Form*, Munster, 1901.

2. John, xiii, 2-16.

3. In the account of St. John, Jesus points out the traitor, by giving him a piece of dipped bread. During the Paschal meal, this was the customary sign used by the master of the house to show his special affection for any guest in particular.

that Peter would deny Him thrice. The meal them continued as usual.

The feast was almost over. The last cup had perhaps been filled. The moment had come for Jesus to accomplish the most perfect act of His love. He took unleavened bread from the table, gave thanks to God His Father, blessed it, broke and gave to His Apostles, saying, « Take ye and eat, this is my body which is given for you ». Then, taking the chalice, and giving thanks to God, He said, « Take ye and drink; for this is my blood of the new testament which shall be shed for many unto remission of sins ».

Jesus had thus instituted the new Pasch, after He had first obeyed the ritual of the old : *observata lege plene cibis in legalibus,* as St. Thomas of Aquin has so beautifully put it. The old Pasch had been preliminary to the sacrifice of the old covenant. So too, the new Pasch was the first step in the sacrifice of the new convenant that was to take place on Calvary. It was first its harbinger; it was to be later its memorial.

The Formulae of the Consecration of the bread and wine. — Towards the end of the Paschal meal, we are told by St. Matthew and St. Mark, while the Apostles were still eating, Jesus *took bread,* and having *pronounced the words of thanksgiving* or *blessing*, *He broke it* and *gave* it to His disciples saying : *Take ye and eat*, *this is my body.*

In thus blessing and breaking the bread, Jesus played the part of the father of the Jewish family. This *breaking of bread* must have had particular import for the disciples, since it was by this sign that the travellers of Emmaus recognized the Savior on the night of the resurrection. Must we look upon this as a mere coincidence? Hardly, for in breaking the bread Jesus clearly indicated the immolation of His body on Calvary, and the Apostles vere quick to grasp His meaning. During the entire Apostolic age and for a long time after, the *breaking of bread* was the com-

monest term used to designate the Eucharistic ceremony.

After breaking the bread, Jesus then *gave it to His disciples*, saying, « *Take ye and eat, this is my body* ». The meaning of the latter phrase has always been the object of serious study. All Catholic theologians agree that in pronouncing these words, « *This is my body* », Our Savior became really present under the appearances of bread, although their explanations of the formula differ.

The more common opinion holds that « *this* » is a demonstrative *pronoun,* designating what Jesus was actually holding in His hands, namely the visible object which He has broken and now offers to His disciples. Since the words effect what they mean, when they shall have been said, « *this* » will refer to the body of Christ [1].

Maldonatus, however, makes *this* a demonstrative *adjective,* referring to the body of Christ which will be present as soon as the words are pronounced. In the light of this interpretation, the Savior said : « *This body which will be present is my body* ». This interpretation seems to be supported by the Vulgate, which renders the Greek formula : Τοῦτό ἐστι τὸ αἷμά μου, into the Latin *Hic est sanguis meus* [2].

---

1. Cf. Thom. Aq., *Sum. theol.*, III, q. lxxviii, a. 5. *Oportet quidem intelligere prædictam locutionem secundum ultimum instans prolationis verborum... tamen ita quod præsupponatur ex parte subjecti... id quod communiter se habet quantum ad utrumque, scilicet contentum in generali sub istis speciebus.*

2. J. Maldonat, *In Matth.*, c. xxvi, *De Eucharistiæ institutione : Minime dubium est quin eodem modo hoc pronomen sumendum sit, cum de pane Christus dicit* : Τοῦτό ἐστι τὸ σῶμα μου, hoc est corpus meum, *et cum de sanguine dicit :* Τοῦτό ἐστι τὸ αἷμά μου, hic est sanguis meus. *Cum autem de sanguine dicit :* Τοῦτό ἐστι τὸ αἷμά μου, hic est sanguis meus, *pronomen non refertur ad vinum, sed ad sanguinem, quod ex Luca et Paulo manifestum est, qui pronomen cum sequenti, non cum præcedenti conjunxerunt, dicentes :* Τοῦτο τὸ ποτήριον; *ergo et cum dicit :* Hoc est corpus meum, *illud* hoc *non convenit cum præcedenti pane, sed cum sequenti corpore ; nec substantivum, sed adjectivum est, quia, sicut illud cum sequenti* calix, *ita hoc cum sequenti* corpus, *ut adjectivum cum substantivo, cunjunctum est, ideoque non potest panem, sed corpus Christi demonstrare.*

The word *is*, has always been taken by Catholic theologians in its literal sense. As a copulative it unites the subject and object of the sentence : *This is my body*. But because this phrase not only declares but effects what it means, *habet virtutem factivam instrumentaliter conversionis panis in corpus Christi*, the verb *is* is operative as well as copulative, and becomes the instrumental cause of the changing of the bread into the body of Christ [1].

---

1. We all know how the Reformers of the sixteenth century attempted to prove that the verb *is* in the sentence, *This is my body*, must be taken in the sense of *signifying*, *foreshadowing* or *representing*. Cardinal WISEMAN has shown in a very striking way that this word can be taken only in its literal meaning. Certain things, he says, are symbolical by nature, as for instance a bust or portrait. Hence, if while pointing to a statue of marble, one were to say. « This *is* Plato », every one would understand that *is* is here employed in a representative sense. Other objects become symbols by general usage, as when we say of the passing flag, « There goes France. » Finally there are other objects which are symbols neither by nature nor custom, but because the writer has chosen to make them so, and tells of his intention. Jesus Himself has used this literary device at the conclusion of the parable of the sower : « The field is the world; the seed is the word of God. » There is no doubt as to His meaning. The knowledge that we have listened to a parable, and the very context, oblige us to give a figurative sense to the verb *to be*. If, on the other hand, a speaker refers to an object which is not by its nature a symbol, or has never been so used, and is not here suggested as a comparison, image or metaphor by the author, and if in addition we find the author using it in momentous circumstances, while talking to simple men whom He loves more than life itself, and to whom he is giving one last testimony of love, assuredly his statement must be taken literally, or else he must be branded as a fool. Cf. *Lectures on the Eucharist*, lect. V.

In order to force us to interpret the word *to be* in the sense of *to represent*, it has been alleged that Syriac and Aramaic, the language of our Savior, possessed no word meaning *to represent*, and that consequently the word *to be* was used instead. Even if this premise were true, it would still be necessary to explain why the Greek translator, who certainly must have known Aramaic, did not remove the equivocation. The premise, however, is false. Cardinal Wiseman has counted forty five expressions in Syriac which give the idea of « *represent* ». Cf. *Lectures on the Eucharist*, lect. VII.

It has been already shown above, pp. 188, foll., to what extent Liberal Protestants go in order to interpret the words of the institution in a symbolical manner. According to SPITTA, the last supper was the means Christ took to announce the messianic banquet. According to WEIZSAECKER and JUELICHER, it was but a parable of His death. To H. J. HOLTZMANN, the rite was but the

In using the words, *This is my body*, Our Savior truly renders His body present under the appearances of bread. Moreover, it was His actual body, that is, His earthly body that was present. It will be His glorious body after the resurrection.

Then, taking the cup of wine, and giving thanks, Christ gave it to His Apostles saying : *Drink ye all of this, for this is my blood, the blood of the new covenant which shall be shed for many unto the remission of sins.* The phrase, *this is my blood*, is explained in the same way as the formula, *This is my body.*

However, besides saying *This is my blood*, Jesus adds : *the blood of the covenant*, according to St. Matthew and St. Mark, or, if we accept the readings of several manuscripts of these Gospels, which agree with the accounts of St. Luke and St. Paul, *the blood of the new covenant*[1].

It is the blood of the covenant *shed for many*, τὸ περὶ

---

symbol of the new covenant which He was to establish by the shedding of His blood. J. Réville believes that Jesus merely desired to point out to His disciples the strong moral union that existed between Him and them. Finally, if we accept the opinion of M. Goguel, Jesus seized this occasion to tell His followers how ready He was to give His life for them, just as He had already given them His thoughts, His heart, and His labours. These numerous and varied interpretations are as empty as they are arbitrary. The Catholic interpretation alone harmonizes with the words of the texts. During the last supper, Jesus truly intended to give His body to eat, and His blood to drink. Liberal critics are well aware that only by attacking the personality of Christ Himself, can they hope to set aside the plain and evident meaning of the words of the institution. Consequently they have cast doubt upon the divinity of Christ, nay have denied or doubted the personality of God. When once the keystone is removed, it is impossible to preserve the building.

1. If the blood of Jesus is indeed the blood and seal of a covenant, it is assuredly a new covenant of which He speaks. See M.-J. Lagrange, *L'Evangile selon saint Marc*, p. 349, Paris, 1911. Both the context and the evident reference to the account in Exodus, require that the Greek text : τοῦτο ἐστιν τὸ αἷμά μου τὸ τῆς διαθήκης be rendered : « This is my blood, the blood of the *covenant* », and not the blood of the *testament* in the sense in which this expression is found in *Hebr.* IX, 16-17. Since, however, the new covenant has been consecrated by the death of Him who established it, it can be spoken of as a testament.

πολλῶν ἐκχυνόμενον, Jesus is truly offering therefore *His blood shed*, and not the symbol of His blood about to be shed. At the last supper, indeed, the blood of Christ was really shed mysteriously. The supper was a real sacrifice, the sacrifice of the new covenant. In the old dispensation, the sacrificial covenant of Sinai had been preceded by the Passover of God. Similarly, Jesus institutes the Eucharistic sacrifice to announce or prepare the great sacrificial covenant of Calvary. What the old Passover had been to the sacrifice of the Mosaic covenant, that the new Pasch is to the sacrifice of the cross.

The sacrifice on Sinai had sealed and consecrated the covenant or contract between God and His people. The contract and its seal of blood were thus clearly distinguished. So also, the blood of Calvary and of the last supper is the blood of the new covenant. We see the shedding of blood, and we hear the covenant sealed by Our Savior in these words : « This is the blood shed in remission of sins. » The blood of Christ washed away the sins of men, and at the same time was the pledge of man's reconciliation with God, yea it was Christ's blood that effected this covenant. On Calvary as well as at the last supper, Christ offered to His Father the gift of obedience and love, and the atonement for the sins of mankind, that were demanded by God's sanctity and infinite justice. Here was sin's ransom, λύτρον ἀντὶ πολλῶν, a moral reparation as well as a penal satisfaction. Because of it, God pardons man, and showers His grace upon him. The reconciliation is sealed, yea effected by the blood of Christ.

The doctrine of the real presence found in the accounts of the institution. — A study of the accounts of the institution of the Eucharist leads to the following conclusions. At the end of the last supper, Jesus gave His disciples His body to eat, and His blood, which was being shed, to drink, under the appearances of bread and wine. Besides, in thus giving His body and blood, separated one from the other,

and in saying that the cup contained His blood that was shed, our Savior clearly indicated the mystic immolation to which He had just subjected Himself. Communion in the body and blood of Christ, and the mystic immolation of Christ, are the two most striking facts found in those accounts. Both these are already found woven together in the one divine plan; for, if the disciples receive communion, it is in order to share in the sacrifice of the new covenant, to become fellow victims with Christ, and with Him, in Him and by Him, to be reconciled with the Eternal Father. No more absolute statement of the doctrine of the real presence could be expected.

The celebration of the Eucharist. — We have already[1] seen what abuses the Corinthians had introduced into the celebration of the Eucharist. Modelled after the last supper, the Eucharistic ceremony consisted of two distinct parts : a common meal, and then the communion. For the common meal everyone was supposed to provide for himself, with the exception of the poorer Christians who, of course, partook of the bounty of the rich. Moreover, the meal was not to begin until all had assembled, and every one had been provided for. The Christians of Corinth had gradually drifted away from the exact observance of these regulations, and had returned more and more to the customs of pagan confraternities. The rich gathered in one place, and without waiting for the poor, gave themselves up to excessive indulgence, and in such unchristian dispositions, came to receive the body and blood of Christ.

The Apostle severely condemned these outrages. Then, deeming it necessary, he repeats the story of the institution of the Eucharist. In conclusion he gives practical recommendations wherein the doctrine of the real presence is stated almost as clearly as in the account of the institution itself[2].

---

1. See above, p. 203.
2. *I Cor.*, xi, 26-29.

Each time, he writes to the Corinthians, you communicate, you announce the death of the Lord [1]. So true is this, the Apostle adds, that he who would eat the bread or drink the chalice of the Lord unworthily would be guilty against the body and blood of the Lord : ἔνοχος ἔσται τοῦ σώματος καὶ αἵματος τοῦ Κυρίου. In the New Testament Greek, the word ἔνοχος signifies *to be liable to punishment* because of an offense or profanation against anyone [2]. Hence the sense of this passage is this : « He who communicates unworthily is liable to that punishment which those deserve who offend the body and blood of Christ. » It is worthy of note that the Apostle does not say that the unworthy communicant is *guilty against Our Lord,* but that he is *guilty against the body of Our Lord*, thus showing that the bread and wine are not mere symbols, but really and truly conceal, under their appearances, the body and blood of Christ [3].

St. Paul goes on to say that such a crime is abominable. He who communicates unworthily *does not discern the body of Christ,* that is, he does not treat the bread (after transubstantiation), as the body of Christ immolated for us. Thus it is that *he eats and drinks his own condemnation,* namely the body and blood of Him who is the judge of the living and the dead. We find in these warnings two more statements of the doctrine of the real presence.

When, then, you wish to communicate, the Apostle continues, begin by *proving yourselves*, namely by examining and judging yourselves, and purifying your intention and conduct.

---

1. Here of course the announcement of the death of the Lord cannot be understood as of a future event, for the event has passed. Rather, it has the sense of celebrating or representing this death, agreeably to the words : « Do this in memory of me. » See P. Batiffol, *Études d'Hist., et de Théol. Posit.* 2nd series, *L'Eucharistie*[4], p. 106.

2. Matth., xxvi, 66. — Mark, iii, 29; xiv, 64. — James, ii, 10.

3. Ch. Ruch, art. *Eucharistie*, in *Dict. de Théol. cath.*, t. V, col. 1050-1057.

Before denouncing the abuses they had introduced into the celebration of the Lord's supper, St. Paul believed it necessary to warn the Corinthians of certain pagan usages whose superstitious character was not so evident to them. To make his point, he found no more forcible or striking argument than the doctrine upon which the Eucharistic ceremony was based[1].

It was the custom at Corinth to offer sacrifices to idols, or as St. Paul says, to demons. Victims were immolated in honor of the gods. Part of the flesh was eaten in a common meal by the worshipers of the divinity, while the rest was sold at the market place as ordinary food.

St. Paul wishes the Corinthians to know that he has no objection to their buying, at the market place, the meat formerly offered to the idols. Neither does he frown upon Christian guests eating at the same table with their pagan host, provided, of course, no scandal arises. He does not wish them, however, to participate in the religious meals of the pagans. There the assembled guests eat the food actually offered to idols, and thus intend to participate in the sacrifice offered in honor of the demons. Between the worshipers of the divinity, and the divinity itself there arises a moral bond. In short, these religious meals are a profession of pagan faith. How, then, could Christians suffer such things to exist, especially since through communion in the body and blood of Christ, they have shared in the sacrifice of Christ, and have become with Him one moral body? It is impossible to sit at the table of demons, and at the table of Christ.

Throughout this whole argument, the body of Christ, with which the faithful are nourished at the Lord's supper, is likened to the flesh offered to idols, and eaten by the pagans at their religious meals. If, on both sides, one moral body is effected, it is because all have shared in the one same sacri-

---

1. See *I Cor.*, x, 14-21.

fice, and if all had shared in the one same sacrifice, it is because all have eaten the flesh of the victim. Consequently the Christian who communicates, truly eats the flesh and drinks the blood of the Son of God[1].

We can thus see how the teaching of St. Paul agrees with the teaching of the Synoptics and that of St. John. Fundamentally, it is the same, its individuality being due to the strong originality of St.Paul's mind, and to the *circumstances in which the Epistle was written*[2].

ARTICLE II.

Tradition.

General Idea. — The doctrine of the real presence, which is so clearly taught in Holy Writ, is likewise found throughout the entire body of Christian Tradition. Both the Greek and Latin Fathers have expounded it, in the language and with the intellectual tendencies of their time. Indeed it could scarcely be otherwise. In the course of this somewhat detailed discussion, we shall see how the enemies of Catholicism have attempted to twist the words, and cast disfavor

---

1. A similar doctrine is contained in *Heb.*, XIII, 10-13. There it is said, that those who remain in the service of the tabernacle have not the right to eat of our altar. The altar does not signify only the cross. It is in a special sense the Eucharistic table, where the victim is eaten. The sense must consequently be, « Those who remain in the bondage of the tabernacle, namely, the Jews who still cling to the Mosaic rites, cannot approach and eat the body of Christ, and thus share in the Eucharistic sacrifice. To share in the sacrifice of the new law, those of the old law must be resolutely set aside ».

2. This view was presented and defended some years ago by P. FEINE, in a work entitled, *Jesus Christus und Paulus*, Leipzig, 1902. According to this author, St. Paul's doctrine is, in the main, the teaching of Jesus, but devel oped by the Apostle's religious experience, and recounted in a style that is at once original and argumentative. In supporting his thesis, P. Feine reviews the various points of St. Paul's teaching, namely, his doctrine concerning God, the law, justification, the goods of this world, and the Eucharist.

upon the method of exegesis and apologetics of the Fathers. Their failure in this regard has only served to bring out more and more the strength of the Eucharistic tradition.

The following examination shall proceed along historical and logical lines. We shall first search for our doctrine in the writings of the *Apostolic Age,* and in the works of *St. Justin,* and *St. Irenaeus.* Next, we shall direct our attention towards the *Eastern Church,* and in particular to the *School of Alexandria,* the Fathers of the *fourth century,* and the teaching of *St. John Chrysostom.* Then returning to the Western Church, we shall review the teaching of the *Fathers of the third and fourth century*, and the doctrine of the great *St. Augustine*[1].

I.

THE APOSTOLIC FATHERS.

The Apostolic Fathers and the doctrine of the real presence. — Here we shall consider the doctrine of the real presence, as it appears in the *Didache* or the *Doctrine of the Twelve Apostles,* The *Epistle of St. Clement of Rome*, and the *Epistles of St. Ignatius of Antioch.* The terminology of the doctrine as found in these works, reminds us sometimes of St. Paul and sometimes of St. John.

The Doctrine of the Twelve Apostles. — According to this document, it was the custom of the faithful to gather together on the Lord's day for the ceremony of the breaking of bread, which was preceded or followed by a sermon or a prayer of thanksgiving. The faithful first confessed their sins, in order to be pure and therefore participate in this

---

1. See. P. Pourrat, *The teaching of the Fathers on the real presence of Christ in the holy Eucharist,* 1908.

sacrifice (ἡ θυσία ὑμῶν). The sacrifice offered was the one foretold by the prophet Malachy. For its celebration, bishops and deacons worthy of the Lord were to be chosen by the people. The doctrine of the Didache we have just summed up is given in the text of the footnote[1].

We here find the Eucharistic ceremony twice called a sacrifice. There is no warrant for interpreting this as merely a sacrifice of prayers, for it is the sacrifice announced by Malachy, and therefore real beyond the shadow of a doubt. Moreover bishops and deacons worthy of the Lord are to be chosen to offer up this sacrifice. Such an act, confined to particular ministers, can be none other than a true and real sacrifice. We are sure therefore that the rite here mentioned is the one same Eucharistic celebration, described by St Paul in the first epistle to the Corinthians, in which the body of Christ is delivered up for us, and His blood shed for us, and in which the faithful participate by communing in the divine victim.

Besides relating this ceremony of the Lord's day, the *Didache* contains two prayers of thanksgiving, which must be said at the breaking of bread, and the offering of the chalice. In the second and more explicit of these two prayers, praise is offered to God, because He has created the world, and given to men food and drink, but most of all, because, through His Son, He has given us spiritual nourishment and eternal life.

Certain assertions, upon reflection on the nature of the

1. *Didach.* xiv. « When you have come together on the Lord's day, break bread and give thanks, after having first confessed your sins that your sacrifice may be pure. Let him who is at variance with his brother not be admitted before he himself be reconciled to him, that the sacrifice be not profaned. For these are the words of the Lord : « In every place and at every time there is offered to me a pure sacrifice, for I am a great king, and my name is great among the Gentiles, saith the Lord of hosts ». *Didach.* xv. « Choose then bishops and deacons worthy of the Lord, men that are meek, disinterested, truthful and approved, for they fill amongst you the ministry of the prophets and the doctors ».

Eucharistic ceremony are found subjoined to these formulae. At the end of the first prayer, the faithful are admonished not to communicate unless they have been baptized in the name of the Lord. The second formula opens with these words : « After you have been filled, give thanks in this manner », a fact which inclines us to believe that at the period when the *Didache* was written, namely at the close of the first century, the Eucharist was even then generally preceded by a liturgical meal, called the agape. Although thanksgiving is properly a duty of bishops and deacons, the second formula ends with the admonition that prophets, « those namely who speak in spirit and are men of the Lord », should be allowed to give thanks as much as they wish.

St. Clement of Rome. — There is no *explicit* mention of the Eucharist in the epistle of St. Clement. There are, however, many allusions which, when seen in the light of the first epistle to the Corinthians and the *Didache*, undoubtedly refer to the Eucharistic ceremony. Thus, St. Clement tells

---

1. *Didache*, ix-x. Both the ninth and tenth chapters of the *Didache* contain a prayer of thanksgiving. Neither, however, has any reference to the Body and Blood of Christ nor to the words uttered by Christ at the last supper. How could such a grave omission occur in a writing so ancient and [illegible]? J. Réville promptly replies that these texts of the *Didache* are a thanksgiving for [illegible] favors, and have no [illegible] to the Eucharistic [illegible]. It is [illegible] of these [illegible] to the Eucharistic formula used by Christ. See *Les origines de l'Eucharistie*, p. [illegible]. [illegible] believes that these texts [illegible] the Eucharistic prayer, but in a mutilated form. This gap had been filled up by the Apostolic Constitutions [illegible], which [illegible] the formulae of the *Didache*, adding thereto a commemoration of the body and blood of Jesus. See [illegible]. In the opinion of Mgr Duchesne, the first formula contains the prayers of the agape, while the second contains those of the Eucharist [illegible]. See [illegible]. Mgr Batiffol thinks that the texts of the two chapters ix and x are one and the same. They are not, however, one continuous prayer, but two types of Eucharistic formulae. [illegible]. See [illegible] *Théol.* [illegible], 2nd series, *L'Eucharistie*, pp. 113-116.

us that « the faithful, having gathered together in one place, cry out to God as one single voice, from the bottom of their hearts, that He may make them share in his great and glorious promises »[1].

Elsewhere he adds : « We should perform in an orderly manner whatever God requires at certain times. He has ordered that the oblations and the *liturgies* (the duties of the bishops or of the priests and deacons) be performed at specified times and hours, and not in any heedless and haphazard manner. His sovereign will has determined the place and person for their accomplishment, so that thus fervently performed they might be acceptable to His will. Those who make their offerings to God at the appointed times find favor in His sight, and err not in obeying the Master's decrees. Just as separate duties are assigned to the high priest, the priests, and levites, so the layman is subject to the laws for laymen. Let each one of us, brethren, in his own place (that is in his own state of life) give thanks to God, εὐχαριστείτω, in all good conscience, and transgress not the prescriptions of his *liturgy* »[2].

St. Ignatius of Antioch. — The seven letters we possess of St. Ignatius were written while en route to Rome and martyrdom. The voyage was by sea along the coast of Asia Minor. Being permitted to communicate with his co-religionists on the shore, the prisoner was struck with the discord so prevalent among the Christian communities. Unity thus became the keynote of his letters. Just as Christ is one with His Father, and the bishops one with Christ, so Christians must be one with their bishop. Without this unity there is no conceivable union with Christ, and consequently no eternal life.

For St. Ignatius, the best type and figure of this ecclesiastical unity is the Eucharist celebrated by the bishop with

---

1. *I Clem.*, XXXIV, 7.
2. *Ibid.*, XL, 1-5; XLI, 1.

his deacons and surrounded by all the faithful of the city. Where there is ecclesiastical unity, there is but one Eucharist. When schism and dissension arise, the Eucharist is celebrated separately in the houses of the faithful and not in the general assembly presided over by the bishop. To bring back all the faithful to ecclesiastical unity, St. Ignatius exhorts them to celebrate but one Eucharist. His exhortations are both ecclesiastical and Eucharistic in tone. Sometimes the former note dominates, sometimes, the latter. In the light of this guiding idea, the Epistles of St. Ignatius are easily explained.

In writing to the Smyrnians, he bids them follow their bishop, as Jesus Christ follows His Father. Moreover, he insists that the Eucharist alone is valid, i. e., useful for eternal life, vivifying and sanctifying, which is celebrated by the bishop or by him whom he delegates[1].

In this admonition, St. Ignatius treats directly of ecclesiastical unity and indirectly of the Eucharistic ceremony. He writes in much the same strain to the Ephesians[2], and the Philadelphians[3].

---

1. *Smyrn.*, VIII, 1-2 : « Follow your bishop as Jesus Christ follows His Father; follow the *presbyterium* as (you would follow) the Apostles, and reverence the deacons as the command of God. Let no one perform any ecclesiastical function without the bishop. That Eucharist alone is valid, which is (celebrated) under (the auspices of) the bishop or by him whom he has delegated. As where Christ Jesus is, there also is the Catholic Church, so where the bishop is, there let the people be. It is forbidden both to baptize and to celebrate the agape without the bishop. But that is agreeable to God which is approved by the bishop. Let everything you do be praiseworthy and useful. »

2. *Eph.*, XX, 2 : « May God grant that each and every one of you gather together, in thanksgiving for the (Christian) name, in the one faith of Jesus Christ, who is, according to the flesh of the race of David, both son of man and son of God; and may you with unfaltering heart, obey the bishop and the *presbyterium*, breaking one bread, which is the medicine of immortality, and the antidote to secure that we do not die but live eternally in Jesus Christ ».

3. *Philad.*, IV : « See that you use but one Eucharist; for there is one flesh of Our Lord Jesus Christ, and one cup unto union of His blood; one altar, as there is only one bishop together with the *presbyterium*, and the deacons. »

Upon his arrival in Smyrna, St. Ignatius found discords and divisions of a more vital and deeper nature, than in the other cities. The error of the Docetae constituted a real peril to that Church. According to their teaching, the flesh is essentially evil. Therefore to dwell among us, the Word of God could have taken on only the appearance of a body. Hence if Christ had no real flesh, it follows, they said, that neither his flesh nor his blood are present in the Eucharist. On the strength of this doctrine, it was inevitable for the Docetæ to withdraw from the liturgical assemblies where the holy mysteries were celebrated. By their withdrawal they made a schism. Consequently St. Ignatius blames them for two reasons : first for their denial of the real presence of the body and blood of Christ in the Eucharist, and secondly because, as a result of this, they took no part in the Eucharistic celebration, but stood outside the pale of the Church. « They abstain from the Eucharist and from prayer, because they do not confess the Eucharist to be the flesh of Our Savior Jesus Christ, which suffered for our sins and which of His goodness the Father raised up again. Those therefore who speak against this gift of God incur death in the midst of their disputes. But it were better for them to love, that they also might rise again[1] ».

Here the doctrine of the real presence is foremost, explained in terms that are remarkably clear, and by virtue of circumstances, exceptionally expressive[2].

---

1. *Smyrn.*, VII, 1.

2. To these testimonies of the Apostolic Fathers we may well add the following words of Pliny the Younger, proconsul in Bithynia in the year 112. Upon investigating the case of certain Christians, who had been denounced to him, he relates his findings to the emperor Trajan as follows. « (Those who, upon the solicitation of the proconsul, denied Christ, asserted that) their fault or error consisted fundamentally in this that they gathered together on a certain day before sunrise, and sang in common a hymn to Christ as God... After this, they separated and then returned for a common meal, which, in truth, was very ordinary and simple (*ad capiendum cibum promiscuum tamen et innoxium*). » The reply of these apostates coincides exactly with the testimony of the Apos-

II.

St. justin.

St. Justin and the doctrine of the real presence. — Towards the year 152, St. Justin, the apologist-martyr of the second century, addressed an Apology for Christianity to the emperor Antoninus Pius, Marcus Aurelius his son, and Lucius Verus his adopted son. Several years later, about 160, he held a debate, which lasted two days, with a Jew named Trypho, originally of Palestine, but at that time in Greece, where he was engaged in philosophical study. His account of this discussion, he entitled « Dialogue with Trypho ». In these two writings the Eucharist is mentioned four or five times, either in relation to baptism and the Sunday meetings, or in explanation of the figures or the prophecies of the Old Testament. Justin means to manifest his own faith, but also the beliefs of the Christian communities of his time : a claim certainly substantiated by a study of the frescoes in the catacombs. Since the votaries of Mithra sought to imitate the Christian religion in several points, and especially in the Eucharist, St. Justin upbraids them for their travesty of the Christian rites. This dispute is the occasion of a fresh, though indirect, but, because indirect, more important and convincing testimony of his faith in the holy Eucharist.

---

olic Fathers. What was for them but « an ordinary and harmless meal », was for others, likewise questioned by Pliny, the object of a deep abiding faith, (*superstitionem pravam, immodicam*), the bread and wine changed into the body and blood of Christ. Cf. *Pliny the Younger*, epist. X, 96. For further developments see P. Batiffol, *Études d'Hist. et de Théol. posit.*, 2nd series, *L'Eucharistie*[4], pp. 34-39.

The Eucharistic testimony of St. Justin. — As in the *Didache*, so in the writings of St. Justin, we first find a description of the Eucharistic ceremony. « On the day that is called the day of the sun », he writes in his Apology, « all those who live in the city and the country gather together in one and the same place. After as much reading of the Memoirs of the Apostles, and of the writings of the prophets as time permits, a sermon is given to admonish and exhort the faithful to imitate the beautiful teachings they have just heard read. Then all arise and pray aloud for those present and absent, and finally the faithful exchange the kiss of peace. After the prayers are ended, bread and a cup of wine diluted with water are brought to the president of the assembly. Taking them, the latter praises and glorifies the Father of the universe in the name of the Son and the Holy Ghost, and then makes a long thanksgiving for all the blessings received at His hands. At the conclusion of this thanksgiving, all the people answer : *Amen*. When both the thanksgiving and response are over, the ministers, who are called deacons, distribute the consecrated bread and wine and water to those present, and then bear it away to those who are absent [1] ».

St. Justin, however, is not content with this description. He further determines the very nature of the Eucharistic food : « No one », he writes, « can participate in the Eucharist, who does not believe in the truth of Christian doctrine, whose sins have not been washed away in the regenerating waters of baptism and who does not live according to the precepts of Christ. For this which we receive, is no common food or drink. Just as, by the power of the word of God, Jesus Christ, our Savior, took on flesh and blood for our salvation, so the food that is consecrated by the prayer of His

---

1. *Apol.*, LXV, LXVII. According to the terminology of St. Justin, the word, εὐχαριστία, designates the bread changed into the body, and the wine into the blood, and similarly, the word, εὐχαριστεῖν signifies the prayer by which this change is effected.

word, and which, through assimilation, should nourish our flesh and blood is the flesh and blood of the Jesus who was made flesh » [1].

The mention of this grand mystery necessarily called for a word of proof. Naturally, the most convincing proof would be an account of the divine origin of the Eucharist. St. Justin therefore continues : « The Apostles tell us in their Memoirs, which are called Gospels, that Jesus enjoined certain things upon them : Having taken bread and given thanks, He said : « Do this in remembrance of me : this is my body ». Likevise taking the chalice and giving thanks, He said : « This is my blood » ; and gave it to them alone ».

In the first Apology, then, we find a very clear account of the divine institution of the Eucharist, and of the teaching of the real presence of the body and blood of Christ under the appearances of bread and wine. There is moreover, a detailed description of the Eucharistic ceremony, clearly indicating the order of the liturgy, the ministers who officiate, and the dispositions required on the part of the faithful.

This doctrine, remarkable for its completeness, is further developed in the Dialogue with Trypho, especially as regards the sacrificial character of the Eucharist.

The purpose of the Dialogue is to show that Jesus is the expected Messias, and that a new covenant has taken the place of the old. St. Justin is led to develop the doctrine of the sacrifice of the cross, and to prove that it alone is the realization of all the former and typical sacrifices of the old law. « The Paschal lamb that was slain of old in obedience to the command of God », he writes, « was the figure of Christ. Those who believe in Him sprinkle their dwellings, in other words, their very selves with His blood » [2].

St. Justin goes still further. He describes the Eucharist

1. *Apol.*, LXVI.
2. *Dial.*, XL.

as a sacrifice of thanksgiving, prescribed by the Savior in memory of the sacrifice of the cross, to the effect that our hearts may be purified and we may be freed from the power of the demons. « The offering of wheat which was required by tradition from those who had been cleansed from leprosy, was the type of the bread of the Eucharist, the celebration of which our Lord Jesus Christ prescribed in memory of the suffering which He endured on behalf of those who are purified in soul from all iniquity, in order that we may at the same time, thank God for having created the world and all it contains, for having freed us from the evil in which we were, and for having destroyed forever the principalities and powers by Him who suffered in obedience to His will ».

The Eucharistic sacrifice, continues the Apologist, is the one foretold by Malachy : « Hence, concerning the sacrifices that you offered to God of old, has He not spoken to you by the mouth of Malachy, one of the twelve, saying : « I have no pleasure in you, saith the Lord of hosts, and I will not receive a gift of your hand. For from the rising of the sun even to the going down of the same, my name is great among the Gentiles, and in every place there is sacrifice, and there is offered to my name a clean oblation; for my name is great among the Gentiles, saith the Lord of hosts, and you have profaned it[2] ». He has spoken the same things by the mouth of the prophet Isaias, in the prophecy of the « King of glory. » « It is evident that in this prophecy He also speaks of the bread which our Christ has ordered to make in memory of His being made flesh for those who believe in Him, (for whom also He suffered), and of the cup which he prescribed to make in thanksgiving, and as a memorial of His blood[3] ».

To sum up : Among the many interesting details about the

---

1. *Dial.*, XLI.
2. *Dial.*, XLI. Cf. MALACH., I, 11.
3. *Dial.*, LXX. See Is., XXXIII, 16.

Eucharistic ceremony, the doctrine of St. Justin contains the two following propositions : Christ is really present under the symbols of bread and wine ; and the Eucharist is a sacrifice instituted by Christ, which we must celebrate in memory of the sacrifice of the Cross.

The *Fractio panis* of the cemetery of Priscilla. — Several years ago, Mgr. Wilpert discovered a very curious picture on one of the walls of the *Greek Chapel* in the cemetery of Priscilla. The theme is worthy of detailed study. Six guests, and among them a woman, are reclining on a sort of sofa which is semi-circular in form and raised above the ground. At the end of the sofa, a man seated on a stool is breaking bread. That the painter wished to call special attention to him is proven by the fact that he wears a beard. Before him are arranged a chalice and two plates, one containing two fishes, and the other five loaves. At either side of th e picture are baskets filled with bread, three on one side and four on the other[1].

Here, certainly, is an allusion to the miracle of the multiplication of loaves. There are the five loaves, the two fishes, and the baskets which were used to gather the crumbs, in a word, the entire setting of the Gospel story. That, however, is only the foreground of the fresco, the mere decorative detail. It is common knowledge that to the early Christians, the miracle of the multiplication of loaves, was the figure of the Eucharist[2].

---

1. The account of this discovery is related by the author himself in an important memoir, entitled *Fractio panis*, Paris 1896.

2. This idea is developed by Origen in his commentary on St. Matthew. Just as Jesus cured the ills of the people before giving them bread, so too must we be healed and made whole, before participating in the Eucharist. From the miracle of the loaves, Origen passes to the Eucharist, the former being a figure of the latter. Since he does not explain the nature of the symbolical link that exists between the two, it naturally follows that this relationship was

This relationship had already been established by St. John, who places the Eucharistic discourse after the account of the multiplication of loaves, thereby showing the symbolical link that binds the two together[1]. In much the same way the painter in the catacombs wished to associate the multiplication of the loaves with the Eucharistic banquet, so that the former would serve as an introduction to the latter. We have before us the figure of the Eucharist, and the Eucharist itself.

Only the character of the person who is seated on a stool at the end of the sofa remains to be considered. Undoubtedly, he is the president of the assembly. He is breaking bread. But what is the meaning of the breaking of the bread? Christian antiquity knew only one breaking of bread, that namely, which preceded communion, and by which the consecrated bread was divided into as many fragments as there were persons. In the Synoptics and the first Epistle to the Corinthians, we find that Our Lord, after giving thanks, broke bread[2].

In the *Acts,* the breaking of bread is the technical term for the Eucharistic sacrifice[3]. It is the same in the *Didache*[4], and in the Epistles of St. Ignatius[5]. This rite was performed by the one who celebrated the sacrifice, namely, the bishop. Consequently, the individual presiding over the assembly is a figure representing the bishop, who divides the consecrated bread, before giving it to the faithful.

The significance of this fresco depends upon the date of its composition. After having compared its artistic style with similar works of art whose date is well known,

---

known and accepted by his audience. See *In Matth.*, x, 25; *P. G.*, XIII, 901.

1. JOHN, VI.
2. See above, pp. 177-180.
3. See above, pp. 180-181.
4. See above, p. 232.
5. See above, p. 235.

Mgr. Wilpert unhesitatingly assigns it to the first third of the second century[1]. His conclusion has not been disputed. Consequently the « Fractio panis », — the classical name for the fresco, — is somewhat earlier than the first Apology of St. Justin, or at least contemporaneous with it. It seems to be the artistic expression of what this Father wrote concerning the celebration of the Eucharist. St. Justin tells how bread and a cup of wine and water are brought to the president of the assembly, how the latter makes a long thanksgiving, and how at the end, the Eucharistic species are given to the faithful. The fresco likewise shows us a small company gathered for a meal. The one who presides has the chalice before him, and, in his hands, the bread; and we are sure that it is an Eucharistic assembly. At any rate, if an artist had desired to illustrate the first Apology, he could scarcely have proceeded otherwise. Here then are two clear witnesses of the same doctrine. Corroborating the Apology, the « Fractio panis » shows moreover that many Christians held, on the Eucharist, the same teaching as St. Justin[2].

---

1. Mgr. Wilpert, *op. cit.*, ch. v.

2. There are numerous paintings of the Eucharist in the catacombs, dating from about the second century. In the cemetery of St. Callixtus there are two representations of Eucharistic meals, which differ both from the celestial and from the purely funeral banquets, both by reason of the seven guests depicted, which sacred number signifies the crowd of the faithful, and because they are surrounded by Eucharistic symbols. To each of these two frescoes corresponds a picture of a man extending his hands to bless the loaves and fishes which are set on a tripod, while on his right stands an orant. The tripod, which is similar to a banquet table in shape, is thus much akin to the altars of the early Christians and represents the table of the Lord. The orant signifies the Church. It is not without reason that the tripod-altar has its counterpart in the Eucharistic banquet. On such an altar the consecration took place, and the Eucharistic banquet signifies the communion. Thus, we see the artist has painted in two distinct pictures the two acts of the sacrifice, which are grouped into one in the *Fractio panis*.

We must also mention here the very original and expressive fresco in the crypts of Lucina in the cemetery of Callixtus, which is perhaps more ancient than those representing the Eucharistic banquets. The artist has here arranged in two symmetrical groups a fish carrying on its back, or having very near, a

St. Justin and the Cult of Mithra. — In the providence of God, heresies have always been useful to the Church in that they have forced the Fathers to oppose truth to error, thereby developing the traditional doctrine or stating it more and more exactly. The same can be said of the prevalence of certain pagan practices of the second century, and especially of the cult of Mithra.

Upon St. Justin more than upon any other of the Fathers fell the duty of opposing this cult. As Mithraism had a parody of the Eucharist, the apologist was led to denounce this process of imitation, giving thereby another testimony of his faith in the real presence.

---

basket containing bread and wine. The relationship of the bread and wine to the body and blood of Christ is clearly indicated. Already in the second century, a fish, which was the artistic expression of the celebrated acrostich. Ἰχθύς (Ἰησοῦς, χριστός θεοῦ υἱός, σωτήρ) symbolized the Savior. On the other hand, St. Paulinus called the body of Jesus Christ, *panis verus et aqua vivæ piscis*, cf. Epist. XIII; *P. L.*, LXI, 213. And from St. Jerome (Cf. Epist. CXXV; *P. L.* XXII 1085), we learn that in the poorer churches, a basket was used to carry the holy Eucharist. Cf. H. Marucchi, *Éléments d'Archeologie Chrétienne*, t. 1, *Notions générales*, p. 287.

It is fitting to add here the inscriptions of Abercius and Pectorius, which are of the same period and testify to the same doctrine. Abercius, bishop of Hieropolis in Phrygia, had come to Rome to venerate the tombs of the Apostles Peter and Paul. On his return he wrote an epitaph which was to be placed upon his tomb. From it we learn that Abercius is the disciple of the holy *Shepherd*, i. e. Christ. Everywhere in his voyages did he find his brethren; everywhere faith fed him with the fish of the fountain (Ἰχθὺν ἀπὸ πηγῆς) for food, and with a delicious wine for drink. This food and drink signify the Eucharist. The inscription of Pectorius was found near Autun in 1839. « O divine race of the heavenly fish (Ἰχθυὸς οὐρανίου θεῖον γένος), receive that food as sweet as honey, the Savior of saints. Eat until thou art satiated, for thou holdest the Ἰχθὺς in thy hands. » It was the ancient practice for the deacon to place the consecrated bread in the hands of the faithful, in order that the latter might communicate. This detail throws even greater light upon the meaning of the inscription. We have here evidently a reference to the participation of the faithful in the flesh of Christ, in sacramental communion. Cf. H. Marucchi, *op. cit.* pp. 293-299. — P. Batiffol, *Études d'Hist. et de Théol posit.*, *L'Eucharistie*, pp. 164-167. — S. Bour, art. *L'Eucharistie d'après les monuments de l'antiquité chrétienne* in *Dict. de Théol. cathol.*, t. V, col. 1184-1208.

Mithra was the sun god of the Persians. They adored him long before their kingdom was established. In the *Avesta*, Mithra is the god of heavenly light. By analogy, he soon became the god of intellectual light, that is of truth. Great kings considered him their tutelary genius.

The cult of Mithra was first propagated in Babylonia, and then in Asia Minor. Persian mysteries won scarcely any recruits in the Hellenistic world In Italy, it was introduced by the Cilician pirates who were transported there by Pompey. Until the end of the first century it languished in obscurity. Then it spread abroad in a marvellous manner, following everywhere in the wake of the army. Indeed, it always remained a military cult, being chiefly found in those provinces of the empire where the Roman legions had pitched their tents : in Gaul, Brittany, Germany, Africa, Mœsia, and Dalmatia.

The initiation into the cult of Mithra consisted of seven steps. Before proceeding from one step to another, the candidate had to undergo certain tests. The candidate's courage was tested by forcing him to participate in a feigned murder, which, in the beginning, had perhaps been only too real. It is also claimed that the candidate's constancy was judged by his ability to endure the hardships of water and fire, hunger and thirst, the whip and isolation.

The candidate was then initiated into the rite of purification. To be cleansed of his moral stains, it was first necessary for him to receive a baptism of blood. He was placed in a ditch, and covered with an open flooring. Next a bull was brought to the scene. A knife was plunged into the animal's heart, and the blood flowing through the openings in the floor washed the candidate, who arose with his face and body covered with blood, but with a heart purified. This ceremony was a commemoration of the killing of the sacred bull by Mithra. The story goes that this god overcame a savage bull and dragged him into his lair. At the command of the sun he killed the bull, and from the latter's body was

born the entire vegetable and animal kingdom. This is the myth of the Mazdean creation.

The baptized Mithriasts were then confirmed not by oil, but by a red hot iron brand on the forehead. After several other ceremonies, the initiated, who were now admitted into the number of the faithful or brethren, had the right to participate in the Mithraic banquet, where bread and water with wine were consecrated. This food and drink were supposed to produce wonderful effects, and were consumed in memory of the feast celebrated by Mithra and his companions, before their departure towards the celestial regions on the quadriga of the Sun.

Once back to heaven, the invincible god protected his faithful in their struggles against the powers of evil. When they died, he brought their soul to the dwelling place of the blessed. Their bodies were also to share one day in the happiness accorded to the just. At the end of time, Mithra would again immolate a sacred bull and by that sacrifice raise to life all his disciples. Moreover, all the secret ceremonies, which the initiated swore never to divulge, were celebrated in subterranean temples, somewhat similar to the basilicas and catacombs. The faithful or brethren were governed by fathers, and the *Pater patrum* seems to have been the spiritual leader of all the communities in a city[1].

From the above description of the cult of Mithra, one can see that it would be easy to point out more than one analogy between this cult and certain aspects of Christian teaching, especially between the sacred repast and the Eucharistic ceremony. In fact, those who claim that our religion is nothing more than a synthesis of Alexandrian, Semitic and

---

1. See F. Cumont, art. *Mithra*, in *Dict. des Ant. grec. et rom.*, t. III, 2nd part. — C. Martindale, *The Religion of Mithra*, in *Lectures on the History of Religion*, vol. 2.

Roman beliefs, readily admit that the Christians borrowed from the religion of Mithra [1].

Error, it is said, is repeating itself, in almost the same manner. We have here a remarkable confirmation of this truth. It was precisely to show that Mithraism was only a burlesque imitation of Christianity, that St. Justin undertook to expose and criticize it.

Twice, in the Dialogue with Trypho, does he denounce the cult of Mithra, as inspired by the demons to travesty Christianity : « When those who record the mysteries of Mithra, say that he was begotten of a rock and when they call the place where those who believe in him are initiated a cave, do I not perceive here that the utterance of Daniel that a stone was without hands cut out of the great mountain, has been imitated by them, and that they have attempted likewise to imitate the words of Isaias. For they contrived that the words of righteousness be quoted also by them... Isaias had foretold that the Messias would be born in a cave. By means

---

1. See S. Reinach, *Orpheus*, p. 102 : « Mithra is the mediator between God and man; he ensures the happiness of mankind by a sacrifice; his worship comprises baptism, communion, and fasts; his adherents are called brethren ; among the Mithraic clergy there were men and women vowed to celibacy; his moral code was imperative and identical with that of Christianity. »

Fr. Lagrange has deservedly answered the above assertions with a flat denial as follows : « We grant you the fasts and the brotherhood's features common to so many religions. Everything else is inexact. Mithra is called Mediator in Plutarch only, where he is mediator between the god of good and the god of evil (*De Is. et Osir.*, 46). We know nothing of the direct relation of the bull sacrifice with salvation, and anyhow it was not Mithra who was sacrificed, as was Jesus. The Mithraic baptism was an ablution like so many others; the Mithraic communion was merely an oblation of bread and water, of which we cannot say that it even symbolised Mithra. Women did not as a rule have any share in the Mithraic mysteries and consequently could not be vowed therein to celibacy (so far we only know of one Mithraic lioness); as for the male celibates, we know nothing of them save from a single text of Tertullian which itself has been misunderstood, cf. *De praescriptione haereticorum*, 40; every moral code is more or less imperative, and if that of Mithraism was really identical with that of Christianity, why did that fervent Mithraist, the emperor Julian, recommend pagans to imitate Christian morals ? » *Notes on the Orpheus of M. Salomon Reinach*, translated by C. C. Martindale, S. J., p. 40, Oxford, 1910.

of those words the disciples of Mithra were inspired by the devil to say that in a place called among them a cave, they initiated by him[1] ».

In his Apology St. Justin rebukes the adherents of Mithra for having travestied the Eucharistic repast which he has just described : « The wicked demons have imitated this rite in the mysteries of Mithra. For, that in the ceremonies of initiation, bread and a cup of water are placed with certain incantations in the mystic rites of one who is being initiated you either know or can learn[2]. »

Thus St. Justin positively accuses Mithraism for having tried to imitate the religion of Christ on several points, but especially in what concerns the Eucharist. By so doing he gives us another testimony of his faith in the Holy Eucharist, which of course is indirect, but for that very reason, all the more convincing and trustworthy[3].

---

1. *Dial.*, LXX, LXXVIII. Cf. DANIEL, II, 34. — IS., XXXIII, 13, 16.

2. *Apol.*, LXVI. Cf. *Dial.*, LXX.

3. From the time of its introduction into Babylonia, Mithraism had been modified under the influence of Chaldean astrology; in the first century before the Christian era, festivals existed in honor of Apollo-Mithra, which evidently point to an union of Persian and Grecian cults; in Asia Minor, Mithra was placed side by side with the native gods; in Italy, the Mithraic colleges in order to court the favor of the country, allied themselves to the worshipers of Cybela, from whom they borrowed the bull sacrifice which, though surely not belonging to the primitive cult, nevertheless seems to have been the fundamental rite of Mithraism; finally, the cult of Mithra became woven into the worship of Isis. Thus, the Mithraists were ever seeking union with the other votaries of paganism. At the end of the second century, the cult of Mithra won the favor of the emperors. The Emperor Commodus was received among the number of the initiated; Diocletian restored one of the temples of Mithra, and Julian the Apostate was particulary devoted to this god. It must not be judged from this that the emperors had turned their backs upon the old Roman gods. Rather we must conclude that Mithraism was not averse to polytheism, and borrowed freely from other religions. It can now be understood why St. Justin explained the similarities of Christianity and Mithraism, by the fact that Mithraists have travestied Christian rites and doctrines. In his *De praescriptione haereticorum*, 40, Tertullian likewise denounces Mithraism as an imitation of the Christian mysteries, made by the devil.

To-day, apologists consider this explanation insufficient. Though certain

§ III.

SAINT IRENAEUS.

The gnosis of the Marcionites. — While Valentine supposed that evil arose because of some fault committed in the society of the Eons, Marcion attempted a more simple explanation. According to him, the God of the Old Testament is the wicked God, the Creator of matter or the evil principle. The God of the New Testament, on the contrary, is the good God, the Creator of the spirit, and the Father of Christ. Consequently he concluded, Christ could not have taken on real flesh, and that there is no resurrection of the flesh. At the time of St. Irenaeus, these errors were current among the disciples of Marcion. The Bishop of Lyons strove to refute them, using the Eucharist as his principal argument.

The Eucharistic testimony of St. Irenaeus. — The Marcionites taught that Christ could not have taken on real flesh, since flesh is the principle of all evil, and was created by the God of the Old Testament. Nevertheless, in their Eucharistic liturgy they professed an exaggerated realism. No doubt, on the part of the people, this was pure inconsistency, but it was not the same for the leaders of the sect, who held

---

similarities may have been borrowed from Christianity and the other religions of that period, yet many others may have come from those aspirations that are the common wellsprings of human nature, and that find similar expression in nearly all religions. Hence we should expect to meet with similarities between Christianity and the other different forms of religious life. « What we have the right to ask of Christianity, is that it present to us these ideals cleansed of all their dross, that it fulfil these religious aspirations of men, which the petty accomplishments of the pagan cults have failed to satisfy and that it lead men's minds from a groping in the dark after the true God (Acts, xvii, 27), to that swift and brilliant march towards our heavenly Father ». C. Martindale, *La religion des Romains*, in *Christus*, ch. viii, pp. 395-396.

that the Eucharistic prayer did not cause Christ to be present under the appearances of bread, but was the means of infusing into the bread a spiritual power that emanated from the Spirit of Christ[1].

St. Irenaeus attacked more specially the popular gnosticism by exposing its inconsistencies. How, he writes, can they say that the consecrated bread is the body of Christ, when they do not admit that Christ is the son of the God who created matter[2], and, what is worse, when they do not believe that Christ was born according to the flesh, and is of the same human nature as ourselves[3]? Thus, St. Irenaeus argues that since the Gnostics believe in the real presence of the body of Christ in the Eucharist, they should also admit that the Word of God took on real flesh.

Since in their doctrines flesh was an essentially evil principle, the Gnostics further taught that there could be no resurrection, and that the body had no part in salvation. Only the spirit within us can enjoy the immortality of the blessed. To this, St. Irenaeus replied that the flesh of Christ received in communion, places in our own flesh the germ of immortality and of a glorious resurrection. The flesh of Christ transforms our own flesh : from an earthly corruptible flesh, it becomes as it were spiritualized and incorruptible[4].

---

1. See P. Batiffol, *Études d'Hist. et de Théol. posit.*, 2nd series, *L'Eucharistie*[4], pp. 169-179.

2. *Haer.*, l. IV, xviii, 4 : « How will they be assured that this bread over which thanks have been given, is the body of their Lord, and that the chalice contains His blood, if they do not say that He (the Lord Jesus) is Son of the Creator of the world, the God of the Old Testament, who has created matter), that is His Word, by which trees bear fruit, and fountains flow, and the earth gives first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear? »

3. *Ibid.*, l. IV, xxxiii, 2 : « How could the Lord Jesus, if He were from another Father (than the one who created the material world), and of another nature than ours, truly say when He took bread, that it was His body, and that the mixed cup was His blood? And why should He be called the Son of man, if He had no human birth? »

4. *Haer.*, l. IV, xviii, 5. « How can they say that the flesh which is

As the grain of wheat falling on the ground first dissolves and then brings forth the strong stalk, so our bodies, nourished by the Eucharist will dissolve when placed in the earth. They will arise in due time, however, by the power of the word of God[1]. St. Irenaeus is thus proposing to the Gnostics an argument *ad hominem*. If, he says, our flesh receives the true flesh of Christ, as you yourselves admit, it must consequently arise again at the end of time.

Nothing then is lacking in the Eucharistic testimony of St. Irenaeus. Like St. Justin, he relates the institution of the Eucharistic sacrifice, and in almost the same terms. Christ, he writes, took bread and wine, those material things that are created every day, and said of the bread : « This is my body », and of the wine « This is my blood. » In this way, continues the Saint, alluding to the text of the prophet Malachias, did Christ reveal to us the oblation of the

---

nourished with the body and blood of Our Lord, is destined to corruption and does not partake of life? Either they must change their views or cease offering the Eucharist. But our belief (in the resurrection of the flesh) is consonant with the Eucharist, and the Eucharist confirms our belief. We offer to God His own, thus fittingly announcing communion and union of flesh and spirit. For, just as the bread from the earth, when it receives the invocation of God, is no longer common bread, but Eucharist, consisting of two things, both an earthly and a heavenly, so also our bodies partaking of the Eucharist, are no longer corruptible, but have the hope of the resurrection to eternity. Just as the Eucharist has two elements (an earthly and a heavenly one), united together, so our bodies once nourished by the Eucharist contain a principle of incorruptibility ».

1. *Ibid.*, l. V, II, 3 : « When the chalice of wine mixed with water and the bread receive the word of God and become the Eucharist, the body and blood of Christ, and when our flesh is nourished and sustained therefrom, how can they assert that the flesh is not receptive of the gift of God which is eternal life, seeing that it is nourished by the body and blood of the Lord, and is member of him... As the wood of the vine when planted brings forth fruit in its proper time, and as the grain of wheat falling in the ground, dissolves, and is raised manifold through the Spirit of God, who upholds all things and as afterwards they come to men's use and receiving the word of God through the wisdom of God, become Eucharist which is body and blood of Christ, so also our bodies being nourished from the Eucharist and placed in the earth, and dissolved in it shall arise in due time, when the word of God vouchsafes awakening to them unto the glory of our God and Father ».

new covenant, which the Church has received from the Apostles, and which she offers to God throughout the world[1]. »

§ IV.

THE ALEXANDRIAN SCHOOL.

Faith and Gnosis. — Christianity was preached at Alexandria by St. Mark. A church was founded there in the first century, but immediately the entire system of pagan science and culture rose against her. It became very difficult for the church to maintain and develop her position. It was not sufficient merely to affirm the Christian faith or to preach what the Apostles had handed down; side by side with this necessary teaching a higher teaching was required, one that would strive to reconcile the Christian faith with the profound culture of antiquity.

For this purpose, the school of catechesis, or more simply, the Christian school of Alexandria was established. Its function was to prepare adults for baptism and to train catechists. The conduct of those desiring to become disciples or catechumens was closely examined since purity was considered a requisite to the reception of truth. The catechumen first listened to an explanation of the truths of Christianity. This explanation was required to be sufficiently broad and deep. It comprised theodicy, christology, Christian morality, and

---

1. *Haer.*, l. IV, XVII, 5 : « Thus Christ giving to His disciples directions to offer first fruits to God from His creatures not as to one who stands in need, but so that they may be neither unfruitful nor ungrateful, He took bread which is of creation, and gave thanks saying, « This is my body. » And the chalice likewise which is of the same creation as ourselves, He confessed to be His blood, and taught the new oblation of the new Covenant and this the Church has received from the Apostles, and offers throughout the whole world to God, to Him who affords us food, as first fruits of His gifts in the New Covenant. »

the history of revelation. If at the end of this course, which lasted three years, the catechumen showed himself capable, baptism was conferred.

Such of the baptized who desired to become catechists, to teach in the schools or debate with the pagan or heretical philosophers of the town, took a fourth year of catechesis. This second teaching was much higher, and gave to the disciples a working system of Apologetics, best adapted to the needs of Alexandrian society.

The great endeavour of these times in the intellectual world was to discover the deeper meaning of the ordinary phenomena of nature, and of historical events. Each fact was supposed to have a twofold meaning : one, which was natural and easily perceived by all, the other, a much deeper one, and only to be grasped by the few. Everything in nature and history was symbolic, and symbolic in a special way. In our terminology, a symbol is a sign absolutely devoid of the reality it signifies. It was not so for the Alexandrians. For them, a symbol contained what it signified, but the thing signified was part of a transcendent economy, inaccessible to the common people, and to be apprehended only by the mind of the initiated. The Gnostic was he who knew the symbolism of things, and his science was called Gnosis.

To meet the needs of contemporaneous thought, the catechists of the Alexandrian school endeavoured to show the superiority of the Gospel gnosis over that of simple philosophy. After giving the primary and evident meaning of facts, they sought for the profound and deeper significance, the gnosis. As regards the Eucharist, Christ was shown to have really offered His body to eat and His blood to drink under the appearances of bread and wine. Next, it was claimed that the Eucharist symbolized the advent of the *Logos* among men, to give the fulness of His life and light to those who believe in Him. It can thus be seen that this gnosis or profound sense was not entirely exclusive of the

primary meaning; rather it was an attempt to get a deeper grasp of the elementary truths of faith.

Clement of Alexandria. — In a dialogue which Clement has placed in the mouth of Christ and of the rich man, Christ is quoted as saying : « I am he who feeds thee, giving myself as bread, of which he who has tasted experiences death no more; and day by day supplying the drink of immortality... And yet thou wouldst prefer riches to me [1]. »

If Clement is making a gnosis in this passage, the basis of his symbolistic interpretation is clearly stated : namely, that the bread and wine are changed into the body and blood of Christ.

Elsewhere, Clement uses words which, though on some grounds a cause of discussion, are however a direct manifestation of the reality of the Eucharist. The blood of the Lord is twofold, writes Clement : one is the blood of his flesh and through it we are redeemed from corruption; the other is spiritual, and through it we become incorruptible. To drink the blood of Jesus is to share in the incorruptibility of the Word, for it is to receive the Word under the appearances of a mixture of wine and water, and through the Word, the spirit who imparts incorruptibility [2].

Clement has complacently developed the doctrine of the sixth chapter of St. John's Gospel. « The Word (incarnate », he writes in the *Pædagogue*, « is everything for the child

---

1. *Quis dives salv.*, 23; *P. G.*, IX, 628.

2. *Paed.*, l. II, 2; *P. G.* VIII, 409 : « The blood of the Lord is twofold. For there is the blood of his flesh by which we are redeemed from corruption; and the spiritual by which we are anointed. To drink the blood of Jesus is to share in the incorruptibility of the Lord; the spirit being the energetic principle of the Word, as blood is of flesh. Analogically, then, as wine is mixed with water, so is the spirit with man. The former (the mixture) nourishes to faith; the latter (the spirit) conducts to immortality. The mixture of both, the wine and the Word, is called the Eucharist, a renowned and glorious grace, and they who by faith partake of it are sanctified both in body and soul. For the divine mixture, man, the Father's will has mystically compounded by the spirit and the Word. »

(the new convert). He is father, mother, teacher, foster-father: Eat my flesh, and drink my blood, He says. These are the foods the Savior offers, His flesh and His blood. Nothing else is needed for the infant's growth » [1]. It is evident that here Clement is seeking to make or discover the gnosis. The nourishment he speaks of can only be union with the incarnate Word by faith. We do not think, however, that it is a gnosis completely independent of the Eucharist. The words flesh and blood, food and drink clearly show that Clement is merely bringing out the deeper meaning of a subject already in the hearts and souls of his hearers, namely the real presence of the Word made flesh under the appearances of bread and wine [2].

Origen. — Origen who succeeded Clement as head catechist of the Alexandrian school, continued the traditions of his predecessor. Sometimes the realism of his Eucharistic doctrine is perfect. « Let Celsus, he writes, as one who knows not God, give thank offerings to demons. But we give thanks to the demiurge of the universe with thanksgiving and prayers, we also eat the loaves we offer (to him), for (all his) gifts; (we eat these loaves) which become by prayer a sacred body, a thing that is holy and that sanctifies those who sincerely partake of it » [3]. In one of his homilies, he relates the gospel passage wherein the Apostles asked the Savior where He wished them to prepare the Pasch,

---

1. *Paedag.*, l. I, 6; *P. G.*, VIII, 301.

2. Sometimes Clement uses the word « blood » as a metaphor for the Word, just as he uses the word « flesh » to signify the Spirit, because, in his opinion, the Spirit is that by which the flesh has been made, as it is the Word who gives life, the principle of which is in the blood. See *Paedag.*, *loc. cit.* : Σάρκα ἡμῖν τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον ἀλληγορεῖ...., αἷμα ἡμῖν τὸν λόγον αἰνίττεται. The passage just quoted, however, is of loftier inspiration. It seems that Clement does not hesitate to call the Word food and drink, because he is fathoming the depths of the mystery of the real presence.

3. *Contra Celsum*, l. VIII, 33; *P. G.* XI, 1565.

and develops it as follows : « If you go up with Him (to the guest-chamber) to celebrate the Pasch, He gives you the chalice of the new covenant, and the consecrated bread; He gives you His body and His blood »[1]. Here the language of Origen is exactly the same as that of St. Justin or St. Irenaeus.

Sometimes, however, Origen considers the Eucharist as a symbol : « This bread », he writes, « which the God-Word says is His body, is the word of God which nourishes our souls... This drink, which the God-Word calls His blood is the word of God refreshing and exhilarating the hearts of those who drink... The bread is the word of justice which feeds the souls of those who eat of it; the drink is the word of the knowledge of Christ of the mystery of His birth and passion »[2].

On the strength of this teaching it has been claimed that Origen did not admit the doctrine of the real presence[3]. Such a conclusion is as unjust as the similar one made concerning the doctrine of Clement.

Origen does indeed call the bread of the Lord a symbol, σύμβολον, or a figure, τύπος. This symbol however contains the reality it signifies, which is not easily perceived by the uninitiated, but is quickly apprehended by the spirit of the initiated. Origen gives us a clear explanation of this method of interpretation[4]. Hence does he write that the symbol is deeper than the common doctrine, without deserving any praise for this from the Calvinists, just as his doctrine is far

---

1. *In Jer.*, Homil. XVIII, 13; *P. G.* XIII, 489.

2. *In Matth. comment. ser.*, 85; *P. G.*, XIII, 1734.

3. A. Harnack, *History of Dogma*, v. III, pp. 145-146. Harnack however admits that Origen considered the Eucharist as an efficacious symbol. — F. Loofs, *Abendmahl*, p. 49.

4. See *In Joan Comment.*, *t.* XXXII, 16; *P. G.*, XIV, 809 : « The (consecrated) bread and wine can be understood by the *common people*, in the customary sense of the Eucharist; but *those who have learned to see deeper into things* will also understand it according to the divine promise, as the Word who nourishes us with truth ».

different from that of Calvin, when he is teaching of the efficacy of the Eucharistic symbol in a well-disposed communicant[1].

St. Dionysius of Alexandria. — After a brilliant career as head of the Christian school of Alexandria, Dionysius became bishop of the same city. A few lines are extant of a letter of his to Xystus II, asking advice on a special case, from which it appears that he professed the purest Eucharistic realism. A Christian of Alexandria, who was supposed to have been baptized long ago, had occasion among other ecclesiastical functions to attend the baptism of several persons. Recognizing the difference between this ceremony and the one he had received, he confessed to Dionysius that he had been baptized by heretics, and asked to be rebaptized. The bishop of Alexandria judged that he had to report to the Pope : « I told him, the Saint writes, that it was sufficient sign of his good standing to have enjoyed communion (namely membership in the Church) for so long a time, because after he had assisted at the Eucharist and had responded *Amen* with the others and had come to the table to take in his hands and receive the holy food[2], and after he had participated so long in the body and blood of Our Lord, I did not dare to renew baptism, as though he had not yet received anything. I exhorted him then to take courage, and to continue to approach the holy (mysteries) with strong faith and full confidence. Despite my exhortation, he never ceases weeping, is afraid to approach the table, and it

1. *Ibid.*, 16.

2. The way of receiving holy communion in those ages differed from ours. The communicant held out his right hand, which rested on his left. Then receiving the body of Christ in the hollow of his right hand, he gazed at it a moment and then carried it to his mouth. See Cyrill. Hierosol., Catech. XXIII (mystag. V.); Basil., Epist. XCIII. See below, p. 266, p. 417.

is only with great difficulty that my entreaties move him to assist at prayers[1] ».

§ V

The Greek Literature of the Fourth Century.

General Survey. — In the Greek Church the fourth and the fifth centuries were the era of the great christological controversies. Christian life, however, was none the less active, and revealed itself in a rich and varied liturgy, the center of which was the Eucharist. In instructing the people on this liturgy, the Fathers and writers of this period were naturally led to give testimony of their faith in the real presence. Moreover, this doctrine is treated expressly and in a masterly way by St. Gregory of Nyssa, and St. John Chrysostom.

Two Anonymous Writings. — Here we have to deal with the *Didascalia*, and the *De recta in Deum fide*, which are of Syrian origin, and were written in Greek towards the end of the third century.

In the *Didascalia* the faithful are enjoined to gather in the church on Sunday, and « offer the Eucharist which is the *figure* of the body of Christ », that is to say, the appearance under which the body of Christ exists. Let them no longer hesitate, the author adds, to offer it, in the cemeteries, for the dead[2].

The *De recta in Deum fide* contains a dialogue between a Christian by the name of Adamantius, and five heretics who, imbued with the theories of Valentine, deny the reality of Christ's flesh. If, says the Christian, Christ had neither flesh

---

1. Quoted by Euseb., *H. E.*, l. VII, ix; *P. G.* XX, 656.

2. *Didascalia*, l. VI, xxii; see *ed.* Funk, *Didascalia et Constitutiones Apostolorum*, t. I, p. 376.

nor blood, what flesh and blood does He give us under the Eucharistic images (εἰκόνας) or appearances[1]?

The Anaphora of Serapion. — The Anaphora of Serapion[2] opens with a preface praising God the Father as much for His own glory, as for that of His Son through whom we have knowledge of Him. The preface closes with the *trisagion*. Then follows a prayer begging God to intervene, in an efficacious way, into the sacrifice offered to Him. This sacrifice, it is added, consists in the unbloody offering of bread, which is the figure (τὸ ὁμοίωμα), or sensible appearance of the body of the incarnate Word. Next comes the account of the institution of the Eucharist, showing Christ offering His body under the figure or sensible appearance of bread, and His blood under that of a chalice of wine. Between the two parts of the narrative of the institution, there is a sort of anamnesis[3]. After this account of the institution we find an epiclesis to God the Father[4]. In the epiclesis God is asked to send His Word upon the bread that it may become the body of the Word, (ἵνα γένηται ὁ ἄρτος σῶμα τοῦ λόγου) and on the chalice, that it may become the blood of truth. Grant, it con-

---

1. *Adamantius*, l. V, VI, *ed.* VAN DE SANDE BAKHUYZEN, 1901.

2. According to the order Funk has adopted, the Euchology of Serapion contains first of all prayers for the Sunday synaxis : there is a prayer for the opening, another for after the homily, one to be said over the catechumens, another to be said over the people; a prayer for the sick, for the fertility of the soil, for the local church, for its ecclesiastical *ordo*, and a final prayer for the genuflexion. Then comes the Anaphora (ἀναφέρω, the rite of elevating or offering), which consists of the liturgical formulas of the consecration; in other words, the canon, and series of prayers to be said around communion. See *ed.* FUNK, *Didascalia et Constitutiones Apostolorum*, t. II, pp. 158-195.

3. By the anamnesis, is meant the prayer in the canon which ordinarily follows the account of the Lord's supper. It is so called, because it begins by a commemoration (in Greek, ἀνάμνησις) of the passion of the Savior.

4. The epiclesis (in Greek ἐπίκλησις, invocation) is the prayer ordinarily following the anamnesis, in which God the Father is asked to send the Word, or, as is more frequently found, His Holy Spirit on the offerings. We shall later study the history and signification of the epiclesis.

tinues, that all who communicate may receive the remedy of life unto the healing of all infirmities. The Anaphora, properly so called, ends with prayers for the living and the dead. For the time being, we shall consider in this prayer only the expression of faith in the doctrine of the real presence that it contains[1].

St. Athanasius. — Eutychius, patriarch of Constantinople has handed down a fragment of a sermon by St. Athanasius, in which the illustrious Doctor explains the Eucharistic liturgy, and clearly teaches the doctrine of the real presence. « You will see levites bringing loaves and a chalice of wine, and placing them on the table. As long as the invocations and prayers have not begun, there is present only bread and wine. But when those great and wonderful prayers have

---

1. We shall here quote only that part of the Anaphora which extends from the trisagion to the last invocations. « Lord of hosts, fill this sacrifice with Thy power and participation. For to Thee have we offered this living sacrifice, this bloodless oblation. To Thee we have offered this bread, the likeness of the body of the Only-begotten.

« This bread is the likeness of the holy body, because the Lord Jesus Christ, in the night in which He was betrayed, took bread and broke and gave it to His disciples, saying, « Take ye and eat, this is my body, which is being broken for you, for remission of sins ». Wherefore we also making the likeness of the death have offered the bread, and beseech Thee through this sacrifice, be reconciled to all of us, and be merciful, O God of truth : and as this bread had been scattered on the top of the moutains and, gathered together, came to be one, so also gather Thy holy Church out of every nation and every country and every city and village and house, and make one living Catholic Church.

« We have offered also the chalice, the likeness of the blood, because the Lord Jesus Christ, taking a cup after supper, said to His own disciples, « Take ye and drink, this is the new covenant, which is my blood, which is being shed for you for remission of sins ». Wherefore we have also offered the chalice, presenting a likeness of the blood.

« O God of truth, let Thy holy Word come upon this bread, that the bread may become body of the Word; and upon this chalice that the chalice may become blood of the Truth; and make all who communicate to receive a medicine of life for the healing of every sickness and for the strengthening of all progress and virtue, not for condemnation, O God of truth, and not for censure and reproach ». [Bishop of Salisbury's translation. Tr.]

been uttered, then the bread becomes the body and the wine becomes the blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

« Let us then come to the celebration of the mysteries. As long as the prayers and invocations have not been said, this bread and wine are simply (bread and wine). But when the great prayers and the holy invocations have been uttered, the Word descends upon the bread and wine, and the body of the Word is present[1] ».

There are two similarities between this fragment and the Anaphora of Serapion. The celebrant pronounces great and holy prayers, and the bread and wine, which were at first only bread and wine, become the body and blood of the Lord (ἄρτος γίνεται σῶμα). The last formula is almost the same as the one in the Anaphora of Serapion. Moreover in both works, the changing of the bread into the body of the incarnate Word is attributed to the Word. No mention is made of the illapse of the Holy Ghost[2].

In his *Fourth Letter to Serapion*, St. Athanasius explains the manner in which Christ's flesh is given to the communicant. When, he writes, Our Lord promised the Eucharist to the dwellers of Capharnaum, He did not say that He would give them the visible and palpable flesh He then possessed. Indeed, how could such flesh nourish the whole world? Undoubtedly, He was going to give them His flesh, and the very flesh that was to be crucified, but this flesh would be given to them as food in a *spiritual manner*, πνευματικῶς. The manner of His giving was not corporal, but spiritual. Christ,

---

1. *Sermo de paschate et de sacrosancta eucharistia*, 8; *P.G.* LXXXVI, 2401.

2. After St. Athanasius, who died in 373, the consecration of the offerings, in the Alexandrian liturgy, was generally attributed to the Holy Spirit. This no doubt was due to the Christological controversies of the period. Even Theophilus, who was bishop of Alexandria from 385 to 413, severely reprimanded Origen for not having confessed that the bread of the Lord and the holy chalice « are sanctified by the invocation and presence of the Holy Spirit ». See P. Batiffol, *Études d'Hist. et de Théol. posit.*, 2nd series, *L'Eucharistie*[4], pp. 312-313.

the scholastics will later affirm, will give Himself as food, and will be entirely present under the accidents of bread and wine, *per modum substantiae*.

St. Cyril of Jerusalem. — In the last two of his instructions, given at Jerusalem during the Easter time of the year 348, St. Cyril treats of the Eucharist. Since Christ, he teaches to the newly baptized, has said of the bread, « This is my body », who can still doubt? And since Christ also said of the wine, « This is my blood », how can any one hesitate and say that it is not His blood? Did not Christ long ago change (μεταβέβληκεν) the water into wine? Why should we not believe Him when He changes wine into His blood (οἶνον μεταβαλὼν εἰς αἷμα)? By receiving the body of Christ under the figure of bread (ἐν τύπῳ ἄρτου), and His blood under the appearance of wine (ἐν τύπῳ οἴνου), the communicant becomes one body and one blood with Christ. Let him then approach the holy table, convinced that what appears to be bread is the body of Christ, and that what appears to be wine is the very blood of Christ[1].

---

1. *Catech.* XXII (mystag. IV); *P. G.*, XXXIII, 1097-1104 : « Since Christ has declared and said of the bread « This is my body », who shall dare to doubt any longer? And since He has Himself affirmed and said, « This is my blood », who shall ever hesitate saying that it is not His Blood?

« He once in Cana of Galilee changed the water into wine akin to blood, and is it incredible that He should have changed wine into blood?

« Wherefore let us with firm faith partake of the body and blood of Christ. For the body is given to you under the figure of bread, and the blood, under the figure of wine, so that in receiving the body and blood of Christ, you might become one body and one blood with Him. We become Christ bearers by the distribution of His body and blood in our members. Thus according to St. Peter (cf. II Peter, II, 4), we become partakers of the divine nature.

« In the Old Testament there was shew-bread, but this has come to an end with the old Covenant itself; but in the New Testament (we have) a heavenly bread and a chalice of salvation, through which our soul and body are sanctified. As the bread nourishes the body, so does the Word nourish the soul.

« Do not then think of the bread and wine as bare elements, for they are according to Our Lord's words, His body and blood; for even though sense

In his last catechesis, St. Cyril describes the Eucharistic ceremony as it existed in Jerusalem.

The Anaphora opens with the preface, which begins with two acclamations, and closes with the *trisagion*. The account of the last supper, having been explained in the preceding catechesis, is omitted here. The next thing mentioned is the epiclesis : an invocation to God to send His Holy Spirit upon the offerings and change them into the body and blood of Christ. Then follow prayers for the living and the dead, then the Lord's prayer with which the Anaphora closes. We have now reached the rite of communion. « The celebrant says : « Holy things are for holy people », that is to say, the things present on the altar, and which are sanctified by the descent of the Holy Spirit, are for the faithful, who are sanctified by the infusion of the same Holy Spirit, who has been given to them ». Those then who communicate, says St. Cyril, are invited to taste not merely bread and wine, but the figure of the body and blood of Christ (κελεύονται γεύσασθαι ἀντιτύπου σώματος καὶ αἵματος Χριστοῦ) [1].

The Apostolic Constitutions. — In the eighth book of the *Apostolic Constitutions* we find a description of the Eucharistic ceremony [2].

The anaphora opens with the preface, which begins with two acclamations, and ends with the *trisagion*. After the *trisagion*, followed by a prayer, which is somewhat of a second preface, there comes the account of the Lord's supper,

---

suggests this yet to you; let your faith strengthen you. Do not judge according to the taste, but be assured by faith that the body and blood of Christ has been vouchsafed to you.

« Thus instructed and convinced that the seeming bread, is, notwithstanding the taste, not bread but the body of Christ, and that the seeming wine, is despite its flavor, the blood of Christ, strengthen your heart by partaking thereof as spiritual ».

1. Catech. XXIII (mistag. v), III-XX; *P. G.*, XXXIII, 1111-1124.

2 In their actual state, the *Apostolic Constitutions* date from the end of the

in which it is clearly stated [1] that the bread and wine are the body and blood of Christ. Next comes a formal anamnesis, and the epiclesis of the Holy Ghost, asking Him to consecrate the offerings, just as we saw in the last catechesis of St. Cyril.

As we have pointed out, the first six books of the *Apostolic Constitutions*, are an enlarged reproduction of the *Didascalia*, while the seventh is an adaptation of the *Didache*. Now in the sixth book, we meet again the liturgical references of the *Didascalia* in these words[2]:

« Offer the sweet Eucharist, the ἀντίτυπον of the royal body of Christ, in your churches and your cemeteries[3] ». The seventh book contains the following developed form of the first thanksgiving of the *Didache*[4]. « We give thee thanks, Father, for the precious blood of Jesus Christ, which was shed for us, and for His precious body, the ἀντίτυπα of which we celebrate in obedience to His command to show

---

fourth century. The first six books are only a recast of the Didascalia; the first thirty two chapters of the seventh are a lengthened adaptation of the Didache; the eighth includes a complete liturgy of the Mass. The author of this eighth book, who, by the way, is also the redactor of the first seven, lived in Syria, most likely in Antioch or in the ecclesiastical region dependent upon Antioch. See Funk, *Die apostolischen Constitutionen*, Rottenburg, 1891.

1. *Const. Apost.*, I. VIII, XII, cf. ed. Funk, *Didascal. et Const. Apost.*, t. I, p. 509 : « Being mindful, therefore, of those things that He suffered for us, we give Thee thanks, O God Almighty, not in such a manner as we ought, but as we are able, and fulfill the precept that He gave us.

« For in the same night that He was betrayed [1] He took bread in His holy and undefiled hands, and having raised His eyes to Thee, His God and His Father, He broke it and gave it to His disciples saying : « This is the mystery of the Covenant, take of it and eat; this is my body which is broken for many for the remission of sins. »

« In like manner, filling the chalice with wine and water, and sanctifying it, He gave it to them saying, « Drink ye all of this, this is my blood which is shed for many for the remission of sins. Do this in memory of me. For as often as you eat of this bread and drink of this chalice, you do show forth my death, until I come. »

2. See above, p. 232.

3. *Const. Apost.*, l. VI, XXX.

4. *Didach.*, IX, cf. above, p. 232, note 1.

forth His death[1]. » In all probability, the *Apostolic Constitutions* use the word, ἀντίτυπον, as St. Cyril of Jerusalem, to signify the image, figure, and sensible appearance of the body and blood of Christ[2].

---

1. *Const. Apol.*, I. VII, XXV.

2. Note should be taken of the unconscious evolution in the minds of men touching the meaning of the words ἀντίτυπον or τύπος and σύμβολον. In the writings of Clement and Origen, the words τύπος or σύμβολον had a very clearly defined meaning, viz., the body and blood of Christ under the appearances of bread and wine, as signifying the incarnate Word. See above, pp. 253-257. St. Cyril of Jerusalem, on the contrary, uses the words ἀντίτυπον, τύπος, to indicate figure, image, and sensible appearances of the body and blood of Christ. Elsewhere, to express the metaphorical use of an object, he employs the word σύμβολον. See Catech. XIX (mystag. I), XI; — Catech. XX (mystag. II) I, III, IV; Catech. XXI (mystag. III), III.

According to St. Cyril, the three words ἀντίτυπον, τύπος, σύμβολον are synonymous, and denote the sensible qualities of Christ in the Eucharist. To express the same idea, the author of the *Anaphora of Serapion* uses the word ὁμοίωμα, likeness, while the anonymous writer of *De recta in Deum fide* employs the word εἰκών.

The *Egyptian Ecclesiastical Constitution*, which is of the first half of the fifth century, contains a somewhat free reproduction of the Eucharistic rite of the *Apostolic Constitutions* and uses the word ἀντίτυπον or its Latin rendering *figura* in the same sense as St. Cyril. See *Egypt. Eccl. Constitutions*, in *ed.* Funk, *Didascal. and Apost. Constitut.*, t. II, p. 111.

At the same time, however, in Syria and Asia Minor, these expressions σύμβολον, τύπος according to some, came to mean an empty symbol, devoid of the reality signified. Thus it is that Theodore of Mopsuestia criticises such expressions : » (Christ) did not say : This is the symbol (σύμβολον) of my body, and this (the symbol) of my blood, but : This is my body and this is my blood, (thereby) teaching us not to consider the nature of the oblation, but that this is changed into flesh and blood (of Christ, by the eucharistic prayer which is made. » See *Com. in Matth.*, XXVI, 26, *P. G.*, LXVI, 713. In the same strain Macarius bishop of Magnesia wrote : « Christ having taken the bread and the chalice said : This is my body and my blood; not the figure (τύπος) of the body, nor the figure of the blood, as some have rashly supposed, but really the body and the blood. » See *Apokritikos*, III, 23, *ed.* Blondel, pp. 105-106. In a later age, both Greek and Protestant controversialists will write theses on these words, the former to show that the epiclesis which comes after the account of the Lord's supper alone possesses the power of consecration; the latter, to prove from tradition their doctrine of Eucharistic symbolism. Their error lies in the fact that they have not investigated the historical meaning of these terms. See P. Batiffol, *Etudes d'Hist. et de Théol. positive*, 2d series, L'*Eucharistie*[4], p. 363-367.

The Great Cappadocians. — « It is good and useful, writes St. Basil, to communicate each day, and to share in the holy body and blood of Christ. Here at Caesarea, we communicate four times a week : Wednesday, Friday, Saturday, Sunday, and even on those other days upon which we celebrate the memory of some saint. Moreover, according to the ancient custom, each Christian can communicate by himself, when the bishop or priest is absent. This the monks do in their solitude : therefore they preserve the sacred species in their dwellings. At Alexandria and throughout Egypt, each one communicates, when he desires, at home. The bishop celebrates, and gives out the consecrated species; the faithful receives his portion, and carries it with his own hand to his mouth, or lays aside some for another day » [1]. In his *Monastic Rules*, St. Basil treats of the respect with which we ought « to receive the body and blood of Christ »; and, at the same time, of the faith which the words of Christ, « This is my body given for you, do this in memory of me », ought to inspire in us [2]. The recital of the last supper is indeed essential for the consecration of the offerings. Nevertheless, he declares the words of the *epiclesis* (namely, according to him, the whole anaphora) are very efficacious in the accomplishment of the mystery [3].

Like St. Basil, St. Gregory Nazianzen explains the doctrine of the real presence, especially in its relation to the liturgy. « With perfect purity of heart, and firmness of faith, he writes in a discourse, eat the body and drink the blood, if you desire life ; do not refuse to believe in the words (of Christ), concerning (His flesh), nor be scandalized by these (which refer) to His passion [4] ». To Amphilochius he writes, « Do not forget to pray and intercede for us, when by

1. Epist. XCIII ; *P. G.*, XXXII, 484-485.
2. *Reg. brev. tract.*, 172; *P. G.*, XXXI, 1196.
3. *De Spiritu Sancto*, 66; *P. G.* XXXII, 188.
4. Or. XLV, 19.

the word you utter, you bring down the Word, and when with your voice as a sword you separate, in an unbloody manner the body and blood of the Lord[1] ». In a funeral oration pronounced over his sister Gorgonia, he relates how in her sickness she dragged herself to the altar : « then, did she bedew with her tears the antitypes of the precious body and blood which she had received in her hand, and behold! she went away, aware of her cure[2] ». In his *Catechetical Discourse,* addressed to catechists more than to catechumens, St. Gregory of Nyssa's doctrine of the Eucharist reaches the sublime. He points to the Eucharist as the complement of the Incarnation. Humanity morally diseased had need of an antidote, which would permeate its system and destroy the principle of evil. It was for this that the Word became flesh, and communicated the fullness of His life to humanity. This is the antidote. However, the healing of the universe is attained only by the cure of each individual in particular. Our mortal body must become joined to the body of Christ and partake of His life. Otherwise we shall remain in our affliction, and on the last day, we shall not rise again[3].

How, asks St. Gregory, can the body of Christ be given to millions of the faithful without ever diminishing[4]? It does not even enter the mind of the holy Doctor to doubt the identity of the Eucharistic and historical body of Christ. However he only answers a part of his own question, namely : How does the historical body of Christ become His Eucharistic body? In the beginning of His mortal life, he says, Christ was nourished with bread and wine. This bread and wine became the body of the Word of God. Similarly then, by the

---

1. Epist. CLXXI.

2. Or. VIII, 18. St. Gregory Nazianzen uses the word ἀντίτυπον in the same sense as Cyril of Jerusalem. See above p. 263.

3. Or. cat., XXXVI; *P. G.* XLV, 93-97.

4. Or. cat., *ibid.*

power of the word of consecration, (διὰ λόγου Θεοῦ), and not by assimilation (οὐ διὰ βρώσεως) the bread and wine are transformed into the body and blood of Christ (τὸν ἁγιαζόμενον ἄρτον εἰς σῶμα τοῦ Θεοῦ λόγου μεταποιεῖσθαι πιστεύομεν[1]).

There is no mistaking the thought of St. Gregory of Nyssa. For him, the historical body of Christ becomes the Eucharistic body, by the transformation of the bread and wine into Christ's historical body. He compares this process to an assimilation, thus selecting what appeared to him to be the most fitting figure of the complete change of the bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ.

St. John Chrysostom. — « If we were incorporeal, He would have delivered us the incorporeal gifts bare; but, since our soul is joined to a body, He gives us the intelligible under the veil of the sensible. Thus we receive the grace of Baptism through the sensible sign of water; and the body of Christ is given to us under the appearances of bread[2] ». We have quoted St. Chrysostom to show how unjustifiable are the accusations of ultra-realism brought against his Eucharistic theology, and to establish the metaphorical meaning of those passages on which the accusations are supposed to rest.

St. Chrysostom teaches that Christ is really present in the holy Eucharist : « Let us believe God in all things, and gainsay Him in nothing, though what is said seem to be contrary to our thoughts and senses; but let His word be of higher authority than both reasoning and sight. Let us thus act in the presence of the (holy) mysteries, and let us consider not merely what is before us, but let the words of Christ strike deep into our souls. His words are infallible, our judgment is fallible. When, then, He says : « This is my body »,

1. *Ibid.*
2. *In Matth. homil.* LXXXII, 4; *P. G.*, LVII, 743.

let us be persuaded and believe, and look at it with the eyes of the soul[1] ».

Christ becomes really present by the transformation of the offerings : « But now the time is at hand to draw nigh to this awful table. Let us approach with fitting modesty and watchfulness. Let there be no Judas, no reprobate, no one whose heart is infected with the venom of evil, no one whose tongue speaks otherwise than his mind conceives. Christ is present, and it is He today who prepares this table, as He did of old. For, it is not a man who brings it to pass that the offerings become the body and blood of Christ, but Christ himself, who was crucified for us. The bishop, His representative, utters the words, that are so well known, but it is the power and the grace of God (that operate). « This is my body », he says, these are the words which transform (μεταρρυθμίζει) the offerings. These words once pronounced (at the last supper) render the sacrifice perfect on every altar in every church from the beginning until now, and until His coming at the end of time[2] ».

Some Gnostics, who were later to become monophysites, were teaching at that time that the flesh of Christ in the Eucharist was not the same as the flesh He bore while on earth. It is perhaps because he was bent on refuting this doctrine that St. Chrysostom uses several metaphors in which it is possible to find a trace of extreme realism. « Let us who eat of the (Eucharistic) body, and who taste of this blood, reflect that (we eat of a body) which in no way differs or varies from the body which is seated on high and adored by the angels[3] ». And elsewhere he says, « When we consider how (Christ) himself descended (from heaven) because of you, how can you be excused or forgiven, when you do not even (go out) of your house to come to Him? The Magi, who were barba-

1. *In Matth., ibid.*
2. *In prodit. Jud.*, homil. I, 6.
3. *In Eph., homil.* III, 3; *P. G.*, LXII, 27.

rians and strangers hastened from Persia to see Him lying in His cradle, whereas, o Christian, only a short distance separates you from enjoying this blessed sight »[1]. In another place he says : « Christ did not only give Himself to be seen by whomsoever desires to see Him, but He gave His flesh to be touched, eaten, broken by the teeth, embraced, in a word to fulfil every desire »[2]. Hence, the communicant receives the true body of Christ. When He departs from the holy table, he is as a fire-breathing lion terrible to the demons, knowing full well His master and the love he bears to Him[3]. But he who communicates unworthily is given up to the demon, just as Judas[4].

St. John Chrysostom does not forget to point out the sacrificial character of the Eucharist. « The initiated know what I say. The bishop does not touch the offerings until he has wished you all the Lord's peace, and until you have answered : « And with thy spirit ». Thus you recall that the (pontiff) who is present does nothing of himself, that the gifts offered do not derive their acceptableness from the power of a human agent, but that the grace of the Spirit Who is present and moving over all, accomplishes this mystic sacrifice. If man is present, he is but God's instrument. Do not cling therefore to the nature of what is seen, but think rather of the invisible grace[5] ». Thus it is truly God who performs the mystic sacrifice through His priest, when the latter pronounces the words : « This is my body » ; in more explicit terms it is the Father and the Son through the Holy Spirit. These words so theological and exact remind us that St. John Chrysostom is the Doctor of the priesthood as much as he is the Doctor of the Eucharist.

---

1. *De Philog.*, VI, 3; *P. G.*, XLVIII, 754.
2. *In Joan.*, homil. XLVI, 3.
3. *Ibid.*, 3.
4. *In prodit. Jud.*, homil. I, 6.
5. *De Pentecost.*, homil. I, 4.

VI.

The Latin Fathers of the Third and Fourth Centuries.

Latin Theology Versus Greek Theology. — The Greek Fathers have rather emphasized in the Eucharist, the incarnate Word perpetuating His presence among us, in order to perpetuate His sacrifice. They insist on the Eucharist as a sacrifice, and have consequently developed the Eucharistic doctrine in relation to its liturgy. On the other hand, the Latin Fathers insist rather on the Eucharist as a sacrament, without however neglecting the other aspect. Their teaching consists mostly in showing that Christ, present under the appearances of bread and wine, comes to communicate to us His supernatural gifts.

Tertullian. — In his *De resurrectione carnis*, Tertullian shows that the body must rise again to be glorified with the soul, because all throughout life, it is through the flesh that God has sanctified the soul. Thus in baptism, « the flesh is washed in order that the soul may be cleansed; the flesh is anointed that the soul may be consecrated; the flesh is signed with the sign of the cross that the soul be fortified; the flesh is shadowed with the imposition of hands, so that the soul may be illuminated by the Spirit; the flesh feeds on the body and blood of Christ, that the soul likewise may be fattened on its God[1] ». These words express unmistakably a belief in the real presence : the body and blood of Christ are as real as the water of baptism, and the oil of confirmation. If the Eucharist were only a sign, Tertullian should have said : The water washes, the oil anoints, the bread nourishes. And if it were but a symbol, to which a certain power had been

1. *De resurrectione carnis*, VIII.

attached, he should have spoken thus : The bread nourishes the body, and the soul is fattened on its God. He says : the body of Christ nourishes the body of the communicant.

After he had become a montanist, Tertullian reproves Pope Callixtus, in his *De Pudicitia*, for likening the Christian who seeks pardon for his sins to the prodigal son in the parable. According to Tertullian, the latter is a figure of the converted pagan seeking baptism. If the Church could so pardon, cries the impassioned African, who would fear to squander what could afterwards be easily regained? The prodigal symbolizes exclusively the pagan returning to God his Father. « The ring also he is then wont to receive for the first time, wherewith, after being interrogated, he publicly seals the agreement of faith, and thus thenceforward feeds upon the « fatness » of the Lord's body, — that is to say, the Eucharist [1]. » Thus, both as an orthodox or a montanist, Tertullian clearly asserts that the Eucharist is the body of the Lord, and that this body is the food of the faithful.

The doctrines of Valentine and Marcion had spread not only to Gaul, where they had been ably refuted by St. Irenaeus, but also to the Church of Africa. Tertullian attacked the gnosticism of Marcion in a treatise which comprises five books. He shows that Christ has not rejected the material things created by the God of the Old Testament, and can consequently be His son. Thus Christ has not disdained the water which the Creator made, wherewith he washes his people, or the oil with which he anoints them, nor, adds Tertullian, the bread by which he *represents* His own body (*panem quo corpus repraesentat*)[2]. Protestants tried to make much

---

1. *De pudicitia*, IX : *Annulum quoque accipit tunc primum, quo fidei pactionem interrogatus obsignat, atque ita exinde opimitate Dominici corporis vescitur, eucharistia scilicet.*

2. *Adv. Marc.*, I. I, XIV : *Sed ille quidem* (Christus) *usque nunc nec aquam reprobavit Creatoris, qua suos abluit : nec oleum, quo suos ungit : nec mellis et lactis societatem, qua suos infantat : nec panem, quo ipsum corpus repraesentat ; etiam in sacramentis propriis egens mendicitatibus Creatoris. At tu*

ado about this text; the discussion ended some years ago, when it was recognized that Tertullian generally employs the word *repræsentare* in the sense of *to present* or *make present*[1].

Tertullian, however, uses other imprudent expressions. Here is an instance. Replying to Marcion who consistently with his principles denied the reality of the passion of Christ, Tertullian quotes this text of Jeremias : « Come, let us put wood on his bread[2] », which he claims Christ fulfilled at the last supper, when He made the bread the figure of His crucified body (*corporis sui figuram pani dedisse*)[3].

Tertullian likes this expression. Further on he tries to prove the reality of Christ's flesh with an argument drawn from the Eucharist. He uses the same argument as St. Irenaeus, less happily however. Since you recognize the flesh of Christ to be in the Eucharist, says St. Irenaeus, Christ must have had a real body[4]. Tertullian argues in this way. Jeremias truly foretold the passion of Christ, when he said : Let us put wood on his bread, that is, let us place the cross on His body. The bread bearing the wood is the figure of

---

super magistrum discipulus, et servus super dominum, sublimius illo sapis, destruens quae ille desiderat.

1. The use of the word *repræsentare* by Tertullian has been carefully investigated. In its meaning of *figurative representation*, the word is not found once out of four times, and not once in the *Adversus Marcionem*. In the latter work *repræsentare* occurs fourteen times, and invariably refers to a *physical* or *actual presentation*. « We may conclude, says Father d'Alès, that if any argument is to be drawn for the Eucharist from the use of *repræsentare* in Tertullian, it is wholly in favor of his belief in the real presence of Jesus Christ in the Sacrament. » See *La Théologie de Tertullien*, pp. 356-360.

2. Jerem., xi, 19. This text is the literal rendering of a mistranslation in the *Septuagint*. The meaning of the Hebrew text is : « Let us destroy the tree with its fruit. »

3. *Adv. Marc.*, l. III, xix : *Hoc lignum et Jeremias tibi insinuat dicturis prædicans Judaeis : « Venite mittamus lignum in panem ejus », utique in corpus. Sic enim Deus in Evangelio quoque vestro revelavit corpus suum appellans, ut et hinc jam eum intelligas corporis sui figuram pani dedisse cujus retro corpus in panem prophetes figuravit, ipso Domino hoc sacramentum postea interpretaturo.*

4. See above, pp. 249-251.

Christ hanging on the cross. This was the prophecy in the mind of Christ, when, at the last supper, He took bread and said : This bread is the figure of my body which is going to be crucified. Thus speaking, he made the bread His own body. Now, concludes Tertullian, if the body of Christ had not been a real body, but only a phantom, Christ could not have represented it by the bread. For a phantom is a non-entity, and cannot be represented by anything real. Since Christ represented His body by something real, it must needs have been a real body[1].

---

1. *Adv. Marc.*, l. IV, XL : *Professus itaque se concupiscentia concupisse edere Pascha, ut suum acceptum panem, et distributum discipulis, corpus illum suum fecit : Hoc est corpus meum dicendo, id est, figura corporis mei. Figura autem non fuisset, nisi veritatis esset corpus. Cæterum, vacua res, quod est phantasma, figuram capere non posset. Aut si propterea panem corpus sibi finxit, quia corporis carebat veritate, ergo panem debuit tradere pro nobis. Cur autem panem corpus suum appellat?..... Non intelligens veterem fuisse istam figuram corporis Christi dicentis per Jeremiam : « Venite, conjiciamus lignum in panem ejus », scilicet crucem in corpus ejus. Itaque illuminator antiquitatum quid tunc voluerit significasse panem, satis declaravit, corpus suum vocans panem. Sic et in calicis mentione testamentum constituens sanguine suo obsignatum, substantiam corporis confirmavit. Nullius enim corporis sanguis potest esse, nisi carnis..... Itaque consistit probatio corporis de testimonio carnis; probatio carnis, de testimonio sanguinis.* Because this much abused text is somewhat obscure, we deem it good to give a translation.

« (Christ) earnestly expressed his desire to eat the passover... Then, having taken bread and given it to His disciples, he made it his own body by saying « This is My body », that is, the figure of my body. A figure, however, there could not have been, unless there were first a veritable body. An empty thing, or phantom, is incapable of a figure. If, however (as Marcion might say), He pretended the bread was His body, because He lacked the truth of bodily substance, it follows that He must have given bread for us..... But why call His body bread? Marcion did not understand how ancient was this figure of the body of Christ, who said Himself by Jeremias : They devised a device against me, saying : Let us cast the tree upon His bread, which means, of course, the cross upon His body. And thus casting light, as He always did, upon the ancient prophecies, He declared plainly enough what He meant by the bread, when He called the bread His own body. He likewise, when mentioning the cup, and making the (New) Testament to be sealed in His blood, affirms the reality of His body. For no blood can belong to a body which is not of flesh. Thus from the evidence of the flesh we get a proof of the body, and a proof of the flesh from the evidence of the blood ».

Tertullian undoubtedly proves the reality of the body of Christ, and yet why does he complicate his argument by taking as his starting point the bread, which Christ is said to have called the figure of His body, and not as did St. Irenaeus, the Eucharistic body itself? Is it, as Protestants would suggest, that Tertullian was a symbolist at times? Nothing could be more erroneous, since according to Tertullian's most explicit statement, when Christ said, « This bread is the figure of my body, which will be crucified, » He made the bread to be His body. The doctrine of the real presence is therein beyond dispute. But why did Tertullian take as his starting point the bread, and not the Eucharistic flesh? Before answering this question, we must remember again the two existent forms of Gnosticism, the one a popular form, the other, more esoteric. According to the former, the body of Christ really existed under the appearances of bread, whereas according to the latter, the Eucharist was mere bread, containing some sort of spiritual power flowing from the Spirit-Christ. In refuting the popular form of Gnosticism, St. Irenaeus found a common ground in the belief of his adversaries in the Eucharistic flesh, whereas Tertullian intent on refuting directly Marcion's principle, thought it safer to use the prophecy of Jeremias, which the Savior, who fulfilled the Old Testament, had explained at the last supper, saying : « This bread is the figure of my body, which is going to be crucified. »

St. Cyprian. — St. Cyprian, the disciple of Tertullian, followed in the footsteps of his master, and presented the Eucharist principally as a sacrament, amid the stress of the following circumstances.

During the Decian persecution, many Christians had apostatized. The *lapsi*, as they were called, were anxious to receive communion even before they had completed their penance. St. Cyprian objected, and claimed that communion received in such dispositions, was that unworthy reception

referred to by St. Paul in his first epistle to the Corinthians, and which, according to the Apostle, violates the body and blood of the Lord. The act of receiving the Eucharist in their hands and bearing it to their mouths offends God more grievously than their denial of the Lord[1]. Further on in the same treatise, he comments upon the story of the miracles wrought at Carthage either to prevent the apostates from receiving communion, or to punish them for having done so[2].

St. Cyprian was also led to speak of the Eucharist as a sacrifice by another difficulty of a practical order. Some bishops had been guilty of irregularities in the celebration of the holy mysteries. In the morning they used to say mass with bread and water alone, and in the evening with bread and wine mixed with water. For they feared lest the odor of wine taken in the morning might lead to their being detected as Christians. To stop this abuse, St. Cyprian wrote a letter to bishop Cæcilius. The chalice should contain wine, he says, because in the Old Testament bread and wine were always the types of the bloody sacrifice which Christ was to accomplish on Calvary, and which He Himself foretold, on the eve of His death, by the sacrifice of the last supper. Now, the bishop should repeat what Christ did the night before

---

1. *De lapsis*, 16 : *Spretis his omnibus atque contemptis, ante expiata delicta, ante exomologesin factam criminis, ante purgatam conscientiam sacrificio et manu sacerdotis, ante offensam placatam indignantis Domini et minantis, vis infertur corpori ejus et sanguini, et plus modo in Dominum manibus atque ore delinquunt, quam cum Dominum negaverunt.*

2. *Ibid.*, 25, 26. By reason of his unworthiness, the unworthy communicant either puts the *sanctum Domini* to flight, that is either renders his acceptance of the consecrated bread and wine impossible, or at least, if he has communicated, does not receive the grace of the sacrament, *gratia salutaris*. It is well to note here that according to St. Cyprian, the celebration of the Eucharist by schismatical and heretical priests or bishops is just as null as their baptism and confirmation. It is the same when the minister is an unworthy priest or bishop. For, as he tells us, he only can validly administer the sacraments who belongs to the Church, and no one belongs to the Church, who has lost the Holy Spirit. *Nec oblatio sanctificari illic possit ubi Sanctus Spiritus non sit.* Epist. LXIV, 4.

His death, not indeed as a mere announcement, but as a true commemoration of the Lord's death. The celebration of the mystery has no meaning unless there is wine in the chalice[1].

The wine should however be diluted with water. The reason is a very striking one When Christ died on the cross, He bore us in a sense within Himself. Being in Him and with Him, all men died to sin. In the Eucharistic sacrifice which is the reproduction of the sacrifice of the cross, this incorporation of the human race in Christ is symbolized by the wine mixed with water, for water in the Apocalypse is the symbol of the people. For the same reason the bread ought to be made of wheat grains ground into flour and then kneaded with water[2].

St. Hilary of Poitiers. — St. Hilary was led to treat of

---

1. Epist. LXIII, 9 : *Qua in parte invenimus calicem mixtum fuisse quem Dominus obtulit, et vinum fuisse quod sanguinem suum dixit. Unde apparet sanguinem Christi non offerri si desit vinum calici, nec sacrificium Dominicum a legitima sanctificatione celebrari nisi oblatio et sacrificium nostrum responderit passioni. Quomodo autem de creatura vitis novum vinum cum Christo in regno Patris bibemus, si in sacrificio Dei Patris et Christi vinum non offerimus, nec calicem Domini dominica traditione miscemus?*

2. *Ibid.* 13 : *Quando autem in calice vino aqua miscetur, Christo populus adunatur, et credentium plebs ei in quem credidit copulatur et conjungitur. Quæ copulatio et conjunctio aquæ et vini sic miscetur in calice Domini ut commixtio illa non possit ab invicem separari. Unde et Ecclesiam, id est plebem in Ecclesia constitutam, fideliter et firmiter in eo quod credidit perseverantem, nulla res poterit separare a Christo quominus hæreat semper et maneat individua dilectio. Sic autem in sanctificando calice Domini offerri aqua sola non potest, quomodo nec solum vinum potest. Nam, si vinum tantum quis offerat, sanguis Christi incipit esse sine nobis ; si vero aqua sit sola, plebs incipit esse sine Christo. Quando autem utrumque miscetur et adunatione confusa sibi invicem copulatur, tunc sacramentum spiritale et cæleste perficitur. Sic vero calix Domini non est aqua sola aut vinum solum, nisi utrumque sibi misceatur, quomodo nec corpus Domini potest esse farina sola aut aqua sola, nisi utrumque adunatum fuerit et panis unius compage solidatum. Quo et ipso sacramento populus noster ostenditur adunatus ; ut, quemadmodum grana multa in unum collecta et commolita et commixta panem unum faciunt, sic in Christo, qui est panis cælestis, unum sciamus esse corpus, cui conjunctus sit noster numerus et adunatus.* Cf. *Apocal.*, XVII, 15.

the Eucharist in connection with his refutation of Arianism. The Arians claimed that the text of St. John, « I and my Father are one », does not express a unity of nature of the Father and the Son, but only a moral union, an agreement of wills. Besides, they asserted, the meaning of the above text is the same as that of those other words spoken by Christ to His Father : « Father, grant that those who believe in me may be one in me, as you and I are one, in order that they also may be one with us ».

St. Hilary refuses to accept the Arian interpretation of these texts. It is true that Christ asks that the faithful may be one with Him, as He and the Father are one. According to the Arians, the faithful can be only morally united to Christ, and therefore Christ is but morally united to the Father. The Holy Doctor admits their first statement, but denies both the second and the conclusion. We are united, he says, to Christ far more intimately than by a mere accord of wills. Did not Christ take our nature in the Incarnation, and do we not therefore possess one common human nature with Him? Moreover, when we eat the flesh and drink the blood of Christ, we become one body with Him, in such a way that He and we are physically united. Both the Incarnation and communion bring about a union of ourselves with Christ that is more than a mere agreement of His human will with ours, and consists in something that is really and truly physical[1].

St. Ambrose. — St. Ambrose discusses the Eucharist in a very precise way in his *De mysteriis*, where he gives a summary of several instructions made to catechumens. The manna in the desert was a figure of the Eucharist. The new manna, however, is far superior to the old, because it contains the body of Christ. If, then, that which you so wonder

1. *De Trinitate*, l. VIII, 11-14 . *P. L.*, X, 243-247.

at is but shadow, how great must that be whose very shadow you wonder at[1].

Further on St. Ambrose explains the mystery after the manner of the Alexandrians. His gnosis, however, is not based upon the relation of the Eucharist with the *Logos*, but consists in an exposition of the doctrine of transubstantiation. By the consecration, he writes, the nature of the offerings is changed, and the elements of bread and wine are converted into the body and blood of Christ. Christ said : « This is my body », and consequently that which once signified bread now signifies the body of Christ. Christ also said : « This is my blood », and what once signified wine, now signifies the blood of Christ. How is this possible? This mystery can no more be explained than that of the miraculous conception of Christ[2].

The Roman Canon. — In the *De Sacramentis*, which has been falsely attributed to St. Ambrose, and which was written around the year 400, we find a Roman canon. Judging

---

1. *De mysteriis*, VIII; *P. L.* XVI, 403.

2. *De mysteriis*, IX : *Quod si tantum valuit humana benedictio, ut naturam converteret, quid dicimus de ipsa consecratione divina, ubi verba ipsa Domini Salvatoris operantur? Nam sacramentum istud quod accipis, Christi sermone conficitur. Quod si tantum valuit sermo Eliae, ut ignem de cælo deponeret, non valebit Christi sermo, ut species mutet elementorum? De totius mundi operibus legisti : Quia ipse dixit et facta sunt : ipse mandavit, et creata sunt* (Ps. CXLVIII); *sermo ergo Christi qui potuit ex nihilo facere quod non erat, non potest ea quæ sunt, in id mutare quod non erant? Non enim minus est novas rebus dare, quam mutare naturas...*

Et hoc quod conficimus corpus ex virgine est : quid hic quæris naturæ ordinem in Christi corpore, cum præter naturam sit ipse Dominus Jesus partus ex virgine? Vera utique caro Christi quæ crucifixa est, quæ sepulta est : vere ergo carnis illius sacramentum est.

Ipse clamat Dominus Jesus : « Hoc est corpus meum. » Ante benedictionem verborum cælestium alia species nominatur : post consecrationem corpus significatur. Ipse dicit post sanguinem suum. Ante consecrationem aliud dicitur, post consecrationem sanguis nuncupatur. Et tu dicis : « Amen », hoc est, verum est. Quod os loquitur mens interna fateatur; quod sermo sonat affectus sentiat.

from its style and arrangement, this canon must be very ancient[1].

There is a short prayer, similar to the two prayers of our present canon, *Hanc igitur oblationem*, and *Quam oblationem*, wherein God is addressed as follows : « Vouchsafe that this our offering may be lawful, approved, spiritual and acceptable, which is the figure of the body and blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ », that is to say, which is the sensible appearance of the body and blood of Christ. This expression is equivalent to the one found in the Anaphora of Serapion.

Then comes the account of the last supper, where the doctrine of the real presence is forcefully asserted.

The account of the last supper is followed by a distinct anamnesis, wherein the priest offers to God the Father the holy bread and the chalice of eternal life, then by an epiclesis in which the priest asks God to accept the sacrifice

---

1. *De sacramentis*, l. IV, 21-22, 27 ; *P. L.*, XVI, 443-445 : *Vis scire quia verbis cælestibus consecratur ? Accipe quæ sunt verba. Dicit sacerdos :*

Fac nobis, inquit, hanc oblationem adscriptam, ratam, rationabilem, acceptabilem, quod figura est corporis et sanguinis Domini nostri Jesu Christi.

Qui pridie quam pateretur, in sanctis manibus suis accepit panem, respexit in cælum ad te, sancte pater omnipotens, æterne Deus, gratias agens, benedixit, fregit, fractumque apostolis suis et discipulis suis tradidit, dicens : Accipite et edite ex hoc omnes : hoc est enim corpus meum, quod pro multis confringetur. Similiter etiam calicem, postquam cænatum est, pridie quam pateretur, accepit, respexit in cælum ad te, sancte Pater omnipotens, æterne Deus, gratias agens, benedixit, apostolis suis et discipulis suis tradidit, dicens : Accipite et bibite ex hoc omnes : hic est enim sanguis meus. [*Quotiescumque hoc feceritis, toties commemorationem mei facietis, donec iterum adveniam.*]

Et sacerdos dicit :

Ergo memores gloriosissimæ ejus passionis et ab inferis resurrectionis et in cælum ascensionis, offerimus tibi hanc immaculatam hostiam, rationabilem hostiam, incruentam hostiam, hunc panem sanctum et calicem vitæ æternæ ; et petimus et precamur ut hanc oblationem suscipias in sublimi altari tuo per manus angelorum tuorum, sicut suscipere dignatus es munera pueri tui justi Abel, et sacrificium patriarchæ nostri Abrahæ, et quod tibi obtulit summus sacerdos Melchisedech.

offered to Him, as He accepted the sacrifice of Abel and of Abraham and of Melchisedech, so that those who participate in the sacrifice through communion (as our actual canon explains in the prayer *Supplices*), may receive abundance of grace. As a learned scholar has well remarked[1], the epiclesis of the Roman canon is not so much directly concerned with the consecration, as it is with the communion which is complementary to the sacrifice[2].

VII.

St. Augustine.

The Sacrament of the Eucharist according to St. Augustine. — According to St. Augustine, a sacrament is the sensible sign of a suprasensible object; a sign instituted by Christ, but naturally fitted to signify its object: a sign through which God communicates the grace signified, to those who make use of it under certain conditions.

The sacrament is then a sign, a figure, a symbol, that is to say, something sensible and, as such, something representative[3].

In this sign there are two distinct realities, the element and the word. The former is something material, something ordinary, not holy in itself and without any efficacy of itself. But once the word has been spoken, this material thing becomes sanctified and elevated to the dignity of a sacrament,

---

1. See Dom Cagin, *Paléographie musicale*, t. V, pp. 85-86, Solesmes, 1896.

2. As we shall see further on (cf. p. 489 n. 1), the Greek epiclesis is more directly concerned with the consecration than with the communion.

3. Serm. CCLXXII; *P. L.*, XXXVIII, 1247 : *Ista, fratres, ideo dicuntur sacramenta, quia in eis aliud videtur, aliud intelligitur.* See also *De cat. rud.*, 50; *P. L.* XL, 344 : *De sacramento sane quod accipit, cum ei bene commendatum fuerit, signacula quidem rerum divinarum esse visibilia, sed res ipsas invisibiles in eis honorari.*

and straightway acquires the power to sanctify the soul of the believer [1].

The sacrament is a sign which really produces grace [2]. Even, this is what distinguishes the sacraments of the New Law from those of the Old. The latter merely announced the advent of the Savior, while the former truly give salvation [3]. The sacraments possess this efficacy independently of the dispositions of the minister. They always confer grace upon those who are rightly disposed and place no obstacle in their way [4].

If the sacraments produce grace, they do it in virtue of their divine institution [5], and because Christ remains the principal minister of all of them; for it is He who through his ministers bestows the sacramental grace [6].

The sacramental sign, however, should be naturally apt to signify the supernatural effect. This aptitude comes from the analogy between it and the thing signified [7]. St. Augus-

---

1. *In Joan.*, t. LXXX, 3; *P. L.*, XXXV, 1840 : *Accedit verbum ad elementum, et fit sacramentum. Detrahe verbum et quid est aqua nisi aqua? Unde ista tanta virtus aquæ ut corpus tangat et cor abluat, nisi faciente verbo? Mundatio igitur nequaquam fluxo et labili tribueretur elemento, nisi adderetur in verbo. Hoc verbum fidei tantum valet in Ecclesia Dei ut per ipsum credentem, offerentem, benedicentem, tingentem, etiam tantillum mundet infantem, quamvis nondum valentem corde credere ad justitiam et ore confiteri ad salutem.* Cf. *De Baptismo*, l. VI, 47; *P. L.*, XLIII, 213-214. — *Constr. Faust.*, l. XX, XIII; *P. L.*, XLII, 379.

2. *Contr. Faust.*, l. XIII, XVI; *P. L.*, XLII, 557.

3. *Enarr. in* Ps. LXXIII, 2; *P. L.*, XXXVI, 931 : *Sacramenta Novi Testamenti dant salutem, sacramenta Veteris Testamenti promiserunt Salvatorem.* — *Contr. Faust.*, l. XIII, XVI.

4. Epist. XCVI, 10; *P. L.*, XXXIII, 364 : *Parvulus qui etiamsi fidem nondum habeat in cogitatione, non ei tamen obicem contrariæ cogitationis opponit, unde sacramentum ejus salubriter percipit.*

5. *De doctrin. Christ.*, l. III, 13; *P. L.*, XXXIV, 71.

6. Epist. LXXXIX, 5; *P. L.*, XXXIII, 311 : *Ipse est qui baptizat. Proinde homo quilibet minister baptismi ejus, qualemcumque sarcinam portet, non iste, sed super quem columba descendit, ipse est qui baptizat.* Cf. *De Trin.*, l. III, 10; *P. L.*, XLII, 874.

7. Epist. XCVIII, 9; *P. L.*, XXXIII, 364 : *Si enim sacramenta quamdam*

tine insists on this doctrine; he takes pleasure in explaining the relation of similitude that exists between the sacramental sign and the supernatural effect; so much so that those imbued with Protestant prejudices might interpret him as if he taught that the sacraments and the Eucharist in particular are nothing more than a mere symbol[1].

These are the main features of a sacrament according to St. Augustine. They are the more easily seen in the Eucharist that the illustrious Doctor, having nowhere synthesized the essential characteristics of a sacrament, has generally described its features when teaching on baptism and the Eucharist.

In his teaching, the Eucharist is a sacred ceremony, easily within the reach of all[2]. In the Eucharist the faithful partake of a banquet, where the consecrated bread of the altar is eaten, and where wine is drunk from a chalice[3]. The bread made of grains of wheat, ground, kneaded and baked together, and the wine, of raisins : such are the elements which are changed by mysterious words into the body and blood of Christ through the invisible working of the Holy Spirit[4], and which symbolize the grace of union and incorporation in Christ[5]. Thus the Eucharist is a figurative rite, since it is the symbol of spiritual food.

But it is also an efficacious rite, since it brings about what it signifies; it has been instituted by Christ, fashioned

---

similitudinem earum rerum quarum sacramenta sunt non haberent, omnino sacramenta non essent.

1. See in particular A. Dorner, *Augustinus, sein theologisches System und seine religions philosophische Anschauung*, Berlin, 1873. — F. Loofs, *Abendmahl*, pp. 61-63. — A. Harnack, *History of Dogma*, vol. V, p. 159, note 1.

2. *De doctr. Christ.*, l. III, 13; *P. L.*, XXXIV, 71.

3. Serm. LIX, 6; *P. L.*, XXXVIII, 401. — Serm. XCV, 7; *P. L.*, XXXVIII, 584.

4. *De Trin.*, l. III, 10; *P. L.*, XLII, 874.

5. Serm. CCLXXII; *P. L.*, XXXVIII, 1247. — *Conf.*, l. VII, 2; *P. L.*, XXXII, 720.

by His hands and preached by His mouth. Here assuredly, the Eucharist is recognized as a sacrament[1].

Moreover, it is in a sense the sacrament *par excellence*, that the Carthaginian Christians call *life*, because it is the best means to reach eternal life[2]. With a master stroke, St. Augustine reveals the deep significance of the mystery. « *In the beginning was the Word and the Word was in God, and the Word was God.* Behold the food is from everlasting, but of it eat the Angels, of it eat the heavenly Hosts, of it eat the heavenly Spirits, and eating they are filled, and yet remaineth that whole which satisfies them and makes them glad. What man could be capable of that food? How could his heart be made fit enough for that food? This divine food must needs be changed into milk for little children. But how does food become milk, except it be passed through flesh? What the mother eateth, that eateth the infant, but because the infant cannot eat bread, the mother assimilates it, and changes it into her own flesh, and thus feeds the infant at her breast. How then did the divine Wisdom feed us of that bread which is Herself? *The Word was made flesh and dwelt amongst us.* What humility in that man ate the bread of Angels, as it is written! Man did eat that Word by whom the Angels live and who is equal to the Father in all things : by that are the angels filled. But He has annihilated Himself, and taken unto Himself the form of a slave, He has become like to man, that man might eat Angels' food, which is the body and blood of the Lord[3]. Thus, according to St. Augustine, the Eucharist is the complement of the incarnation, in the design of Providence. The Word became flesh, so that through His humanity, we might assimilate His divinity; and the means chosen for that union is the

---

1. Epist. LIV, 7; *P. L.*, XXXIII, 203. — Enarr. in Ps. x, 6; *P. L.*, XXXVI, 135.

2. *De peccator. mer. et rem.*, l. I, 34; *P. L.*, XLIV, 128.

3. *Enarr. in Ps.* XXXVI, 6; *P. L.*, XXXVI, 303-304.

sacrament of love wherein the Savior nourishes us with His body and blood.

To sum up, we may say that in the teaching of the great bishop of Hippo, the Eucharist both symbolizes and confers the grace of union with and incorporation into Christ. It produces this grace, because through it and in it we are given the body and blood of Christ. In the theology of this holy Doctor these two truths go hand in hand. Since, however, the language of St. Augustine has been misinterpreted, we must, after this general survey of his teaching, show how firmly he professed the doctrine of the real presence.

The teaching of St. Augustine on the real presence. — In a sermon on the Eucharist to the newly baptized, St. Augustine speaks as follows : « This bread which you see on the altar, sanctified, that is to say, consecrated by the word of God is the body of Christ; this chalice, or rather that which is contained within this chalice and is sanctified and consecrated by the word of God, is the blood of Christ ». But, we are told, St. Augustine added the following words : « If you receive this sacrament worthily, you are what you have received[1] », you become the body of Christ in as much as you are all united in Him. Hence, it is clear that to the bishop of Hippo, the Eucharist was only a symbol of union in Christ[2]. It is wrong however to look upon these texts as if the second were but a commentary of the first, and thus to take the effect of the sacrament for the sacrament itself. If you receive the Eucharist worthily, says St. Augustine, it will produce in you the grace of union in Christ.

---

1. *Sermo* CCXXVII; *P. L.*, XXXVIII, 1099.

2. A. Dorner, *op. cit.*, has gathered together all the texts in which St. Augustine seems to teach that Christ is present only figuratively in the Eucharist. From these he concludes that the illustrious Doctor of Western Catholicism held almost the same Eucharistic doctrine as Calvin.

When in his commentary on the 98th psalm, St. Augustine reaches the verse : *Et adorate scabellum pedum ejus,* he asks how the psalmist could command us to adore the footstool of God[1]. The footstool of God is the earth. « If, he says, I adore the earth, I fear the vengeance of Him who has made heaven and earth. If I do not adore, I fear to disobey Him who commands me by the mouth of the psalmist. At first I hesitate; but on turning to Christ, I understand how I can without impiety adore the earth, God's footstool. Christ has assumed earth from the earth; for flesh comes from the earth, and Jesus Christ took His flesh from the flesh of Mary, His mother. In that same flesh He lived, and that same flesh He gives us as food for our salvation. Now no one eats this flesh without having adored it. Thus it is that we sin not in adoring God's footstool. Not only we do not sin in adoring it, but we would sin if we did not adore it »[2]. Here again, we are told, St. Augustine goes on to develop his explanation and turning to a spiritual interpretation, he concludes with these words : Receive what you have just heard in a spiritual, that is, in a figurative sense. Now, this interpretation of the words of St. Augustine is not the correct one. It is true that the holy Doctor relates how the Capharnaites were scandalized when Christ promised to give them His body to eat and His blood to drink. They thought that Christ intended to dismember His body and give them the parts for food. This crude view was wrong; the teaching of Christ must be taken spiritually, in this sense, that the body Christ has promised to give really, is not His visible body, but His glorified body which is present under the appearances of

---

1. According to the Hebrew text, this verse reads as follows (see Ps. XCIV, 5) :

« Exalt Yahweh, our God,
And bow before His footstool — He is holy. »

Of course, St. Augustine was reading the Italic version.

2. Enarr. in ps. XCVIII, 9; *P. L.*, XXXVII, 1264.

bread and wine, in a way not corporeal, but after the manner of a spiritual substance[1].

In many other places do we find St. Augustine affirming the dogma of the real presence. In his commentary on the 33rd psalm, he attempts to explain the text from the Book of Kings, which reads : *Ferebatur in manibus suis*[2]. Who can carry himself in his own hands, he asks. Assuredly neither David, nor anyone else save Christ, who, at the last supper, carried Himself in His own hands. When He instituted the sacrament of His body and blood, He took in His hands that which is well known to the faithful, saying at the same time: This is my body. Then indeed did Christ bear Himself in His own hands[3]. Hence he who communicates, really eats the

---

1. *Ibid.*, 1265 : *Spiritualiter intelligite quod locutus sum : non hoc corpus quod videtis, manducaturi estis, et bibituri illum sanguinem, quem fusuri sunt qui me crucifigent. Sacramentum aliquod vobis commendavi : spiritualiter intellectum vivificabit vos.* See also Serm. CXXXI, 1; *P. L.*, XXXVIII, 729.

2. This text is a literal translation of the Septuagint, I *Reg.* XXI, 13. The sense of the Hebrew text is as follows : « David, hearing the servants of Achis, was afraid. Hiding his reason from their eyes, *he became as one foolish among them.* » See I SAMUEL, XXI, 13.

3. Enarr. in ps. XXXIII, serm. II, 2; *P. L.*, XXXVI, 308.

We are invited by Dr. Gore to take a radically different view of this text of St. Augustine by interpreting it in the light of the letter to Bishop Boniface quoted below : « This passage, with others, must interpret his words when he comments thus *in Psalm.* XXXIII (title) *Enarr.* I, 10 : '*Ferebatur* enim Christus *in manibus suis* quando commendans ipsum corpus suum ait *hoc est corpus meum.* Ferebat enim illud corpus in manibus suis.'... accepit in manus suas quod norunt fideles et ipse se portabat quodam modo cum diceret *hoc est corpus meum* (II. 2).' Roman Catholic controversialists generally omit to notice the *quodam modo*, which corresponds to the *secundum quendam modum* above. The bread and wine then considered in themselves represent, and are not, the body and blood of Christ ». See CH. GORE, *Dissertations on subjects connected ithw the Incarnation, the Transubstantiation, and nihilianism*, p. 233, note 1. L. TARCHIER in a very interesting essay has attempted to refute this false interpretation. Judging from the style of St. Augustine, he says, the expression « in some manner » does not weaken the proposition, but on the contrary rather strengthens it. See *Le Sacrement de l'Eucharistie, d'après saint Augustin*, pp. 43-45, Lyon, 1904.

body and really drinks the blood of Christ[1]. How far St. Augustine is from being a symbolist, may be seen from his assertion that even those who eat the body of Christ unworthily, do really eat it, but to their own misfortune. « He who receives the sacrament unworthily, does not receive unto his salvation. Yet from this we cannot conclude that he receives nothing, for the body and blood of the Lord are the body and blood even for those who, in the words of the Apostle, eat and drink to their own condemnation »[2]. However guilty a sinner may be, he can still make an act of faith, whereas children who have not reached the use of reason are incapable of doing so. However, St. Augustine wishes these children to communicate, in order to participate in the feast of the Lord, and to share in eternal life[3].

Explanation of some difficult texts. — Although St. Augustine teaches the doctrine of the real presence in several of his writings, yet, in others, there are expressions that are at first surprising, and seem to be impatient of any but a symbolistic interpretation.

In replying to bishop Boniface, who had asked him how baptized children could be said to have the faith, St. Augustine says : « An infant who has received baptism can be said to have received the faith, because it is customary to call the sign by the name of the thing signified ». To substantiate his conclusion, he gives an analogy from the Eucharist. « Christ was immolated but once, he says, and yet we can truly say that Christ is immolated every day in His sacrament. For, if sacraments had not some points of real resemblance to the

---

1. Enarr. in ps. XXXIII, serm. 1, 10; *P. L.*, 313; — In ps. LXV, 5; *P. L.*, *ibid.*, 791. — Epist. LIV, VI; *P. L.*, XXXIII, 203.

2. Serm. LXXXI, 17; *P. L.*, XXXVIII, 453.

3. Serm. CLXXIV, 7; *P. L.*, 944. — *Contr. Julian.*, l. I, 15; *P. L.*, XLIV, 648. — *De peccat. merit. et remissione*, l. I, 34; *P. L.*, *ibid.*, 128. — Epist. CLXXXVI, 28-29; *P. L.*, XXXIII, 826.

things of which they are the sacraments, they would not be sacraments at all. They do in virtue of this likeness bear the names of the realities which they signify. As therefore, in a certain manner, the sacrament of the body of Christ is Christ's body, and the sacrament of Christ's blood is Christ's blood, in the same manner the sacrament of faith or baptism is faith[1] ». If we read this text in the light of St. Augustine's doctrine concerning the sacraments in general, all difficulty vanishes. The holy Doctor is merely comparing the sacramental sign, in this case of water or the sensible qualities of bread and wine, with the effect of the sacrament, that is, with the sacramental grace of faith or incorporation into Christ; and he declares that the analogy or relationship existing between the sign and the thing signified enables us to give the name of the latter to the former. We cannot however conclude from this that he denies that the true body of Christ is joined to the sacramental sign. In the same way can we explain the texts, in which St. Augustine claims that the Eucharist is the figure of the body and blood of Christ[2].

In certain passages the illustrious Doctor seems to contradict his former teaching, when he says that he who approaches the holy table badly disposed, does not truly receive Jesus Christ : « He who lives not in Christ eats not His flesh and drinks not His blood[3] ».

Is not this the same, as saying that he who is without faith does not communicate, or that sacramental communion is nothing else than spiritual communion? This meaning is certainly excluded by the context, for in this treatise St. Augustine is attempting to explain the supernatural efficacy of the sacrament, and not the sacrament itself, in as much as it is a visible rite. To share in the fruits of the

1. Epist. XCVIII, 9; *P. L.*, XXXIII, 364.

2. Enarr. in ps. III, 1; *P. L.*, XXVI, 73. — *Contra Adimantum*, 5; *P. L.*, XLII, 146. — Serm. CCLXXII; *P. L.*, XXXVIII, 1246-1248.

3. *In Joan.*, tract. XXVI, 18; *P. L.*, XXXV, 1614.

sacrament, he says, it is not sufficient to receive it in a merely exterior manner and with the mouth; it is necessary to take it interiorly as well, that is with the heart[1]. These explanations, in as much as they are given by the holy bishop himself, cast a significant light upon other texts which at first seem to be difficult to reconcile with faith in the real presence[2].

In short, if we take account of the theory of the sacramental sign and the thing signified, which, in practice at least, was peculiar to St. Augustine; if likewise we consider the circumstances in which he taught, and the discipline of the secret which was flourishing in the fifth century, — even though one believe with Batiffol that this was a purely catechetical regulation or pedagogical method[3] — if all these things be considered in their true perpective, we are forced to admit that St. Augustine always taught the doctrine of the real presence. In his writings there are two kinds of Eucharistic texts. The first contain a clear presentation of the doctrine of the real presence; the second are involved in some obscurity. He does not, however, teach two distinct doctrines, the one realistic, the other symbolistic. Had he done so, he would have been in grave contradiction with himself anent the real presence. Some critics, with A. Dorner, have vainly attempted an explanation of this supposed contradiction by pointing to the fact, « that the question of the last supper had not yet been the subject-matter of controversy in the Church and had therefore not received any definite dogmatic formulation ».

---

1. *Ibid.*, 12 : *Hic est ergo panis de cælo descendens ut si quis manducaverit ex ipso non moriatur. Sed quod pertinet ad virtutem sacramenti, non quod pertinet ad visibile sacramentum; qui manducat intus, non foris; qui manducat in corde, non qui premit dente.*

2. *De civ. Dei*, l. XXI, xx; *P. L.*, XLI, 734. — Serm. LXVI, 17; *P. L.*, XXXVIII, 453.

3. Batiffol, *Études d'Hist. et de Théol. posit., l'Arcane*, pp. 1-41.

ARTICLE III

Protestant Symbolism.

Ratramnus, Berengarius and Gerland : the three precursors of protestant symbolism. — All the Latin Fathers of the second half of the fifth century, and those of the sixth and seventh centuries taught the dogma of the real presence. St. Leo the Great (+ 461) was content with quoting the Scriptural texts bearing upon the subject. St. Fulgentius of Ruspe (+ 533) and St. Isidore of Seville (+ 633) reproduced the doctrine of St. Augustine and, like him, refused to accept any interpretation of the Eucharist that was tainted with ultra-realism. Others such as Faustus of Riez (+ 487), St. Cæsarius of Arles (+ 542), St. Gregory of Tours (+ 593), St. Germanus of Paris (+ 576), and St. Gregory the Great (+ 604) freely hold to the strong language of St. Ambrose, and assert that by the words of consecration the bread and wine are changed into the body and blood of Christ. The entire Eucharistic literature of this period does not reveal a single trace of symbolism.

In the year 831, Paschasius Radbert wrote for one of his disciples a treatise entitled *De corpore et sanguine Domini*. Therein he reviewed all the problems relative to the sacrament of the altar, and asserted in particular that the bread and wine receive no exterior change as regards their appearance, but do undergo an interior change which affects their substance (*non mutantur exterius quoad speciem, sed interius quoad substantiam*). The substance of the bread and wine, he goes on to say, is changed into the body of Christ, that same body which was born of the Virgin Mary (*substantia panis et vini in Christi carnem et sanguinem efficaciter interius commutatur... corpus ipsius esse ex Virgine*). However, the body of Christ is present after the manner of a spiri-

the Savior, pertaining to the obligation of eating His flesh and drinking His blood.

In refuting him, Hugh Metellus, a canon of Toul, reproached him for his misuse of St. Augustine's authority. « You declare, he writes, with the blessed Augustine, that the words of Jesus to His disciples concerning His body and blood, should be interpreted figuratively. It is true that these words have both a literal and a figurative meaning. You affirm what he affirms, but you are not with him. The bishop of Hippo understands the words of Our Lord as relating to a spiritual communion in His body and blood, which is possible only to the good, but this very spiritual communion with Christ implies a real communion common to both the good and the wicked, since many eat the body of the Lord, who dwell not in Him and are not His members. Our incorporation into Christ through the sacrament is indeed the sign of our union with Him either in this life or in the next, and it is in this sense that Augustine could call the sacrament the visible sign of an invisible grace. None the less, the holy Doctor believed in the real presence. One has only to recall the explicit words of one of his sermons : « After their conversion to the faith, they (the faithful) drank the very blood of Jesus Christ, which the Jews, His persecutors, had shed[1]. »

Different forms of Protestant Symbolism. — For those who accept Luther's fundamental principle of justification by faith alone, good works are useless, and the sacraments are nothing more than sensible signs to awaken faith, or to assure the recipient that his sins have been forgiven. This refusal to admit any production of grace through the sacra-

1. *Epist. IV, Ad Gerlandum, P. L.*, CLXXXVIII, 1273-1274 (see AUGUSTINE, serm. LXXVII, 4; *P. L.*, XXXVIII, 485). The explanation given by Hugh Metellus is the one we have quoted before, and the one which has been accepted by P. SCHANZ. *Die Lehre des h. Augustinus über die Eucharistie*, in *Theologische Quartalschrift*, 1896, p. 80-115. — P. PORTALIÉ, art. *Augustin*, in *Dict. de Théol. cathol.*, t. I, 2418-2426. — J. TIXERONT, *History of dogma*, vol. II, p. 408-415.

ments resulted in a diminution of the number of the sacraments. Only two were retained : baptism and the Eucharist.

The doctrine of the real presence could not easily be reconciled with the new concept of a sacrament. If the Lord's Supper is but the seal of divine pardon, or the pledge of the Gospel promises, what need is there that Christ dwell upon our altars? The bread and wine by themselves can attain and bring about all the effects of the sacrament. The inevitableness of these conclusions occurred to Carlstadt, who straightway pointed out to Luther that to deny the inefficacy of the sacrament, was practically to deny the doctrine of the real presence.

Luther tells us that he would willingly have acquiesced in the proposals of Carlstadt, but was prevented from so doing because he wished to avoid violent exegesis, or perhaps, more truthfully, because he liked, out of jealousy, to oppose his disciples. The words of the institution are altogether too clear, he says [1], a child could easily understand them [2]. Christ is in the bread as a sword in its scabbard. He communicates His true flesh and blood *in, cum,* and *sub* the exterior symbols, which are regarded not as simple *signa,* but as the *vehicula et media collativa* offered equally to all communicants, to the faithful as to the unfaithful, to the former *ad veniam peccatorum*, to the latter *ad damnationem* [3].

Zwingli of Zurich [4], and OEcolampadius of Basle [5], the two leaders of the sacramentarian party, did not hesitate to follow out the principle of justification by faith alone to its logical conclusion, from which Luther had shrunk. In the

---

1. See *Letter to the Christians of Strasburg.* Cf. G. De Wette, *Luthers Briefe,* II, p. 577.

2. See *Apology of the Lord's Supper.*

3. See *Augsburg Confession,* art. X.

4. See *Fidei ecclesiasticae expositio,* p. 551. See also the memoir addressed *Illustrissimis Germaniae Principibus in conciliis Aug. congreg.*, p. 546.

5. See *De vero intellectu verborum : Hoc est corpus meum.*

the Savior, pertaining to the obligation of eating His flesh and drinking His blood.

In refuting him, Hugh Metellus, a canon of Toul, reproached him for his misuse of St. Augustine's authority. « You declare, he writes, with the blessed Augustine, that the words of Jesus to His disciples concerning His body and blood, should be interpreted figuratively. It is true that these words have both a literal and a figurative meaning. You affirm what he affirms, but you are not with him. The bishop of Hippo understands the words of Our Lord as relating to a spiritual communion in His body and blood, which is possible only to the good, but this very spiritual communion with Christ implies a real communion common to both the good and the wicked, since many eat the body of the Lord, who dwell not in Him and are not His members. Our incorporation into Christ through the sacrament is indeed the sign of our union with Him either in this life or in the next, and it is in this sense that Augustine could call the sacrament the visible sign of an invisible grace. None the less, the holy Doctor believed in the real presence. One has only to recall the explicit words of one of his sermons : « After their conversion to the faith, they (the faithful) drank the very blood of Jesus Christ, which the Jews, His persecutors, had shed[1]. »

Different forms of Protestant Symbolism. — For those who accept Luther's fundamental principle of justification by faith alone, good works are useless, and the sacraments are nothing more than sensible signs to awaken faith, or to assure the recipient that his sins have been forgiven. This refusal to admit any production of grace through the sacra-

1. *Epist. IV, Ad Gerlandum, P. L.*, CLXXXVIII, 1273-1274 (see AUGUSTINE, serm. LXXVII, 4; *P. L.*, XXXVIII, 485). The explanation given by Hugh Metellus is the one we have quoted before, and the one which has been accepted by P. SCHANZ. *Die Lehre des h. Augustinus über die Eucharistie*, in *Theologische Quartalschrift*, 1896, p. 80-115. — P. PORTALIÉ, art. *Augustin*, in *Dict. de Théol. cathol.*, t. I, 2418-2426. — J. TIXERONT, *History of dogma*, vol. II, p. 408-415.

ments resulted in a diminution of the number of the sacraments. Only two were retained : baptism and the Eucharist.

The doctrine of the real presence could not easily be reconciled with the new concept of a sacrament. If the Lord's Supper is but the seal of divine pardon, or the pledge of the Gospel promises, what need is there that Christ dwell upon our altars? The bread and wine by themselves can attain and bring about all the effects of the sacrament. The inevitableness of these conclusions occurred to Carlstadt, who straightway pointed out to Luther that to deny the inefficacy of the sacrament, was practically to deny the doctrine of the real presence.

Luther tells us that he would willingly have acquiesced in the proposals of Carlstadt, but was prevented from so doing because he wished to avoid violent exegesis, or perhaps, more truthfully, because he liked, out of jealousy, to oppose his disciples. The words of the institution are altogether too clear, he says [1], a child could easily understand them [2]. Christ is in the bread as a sword in its scabbard. He communicates His true flesh and blood *in, cum,* and *sub* the exterior symbols, which are regarded not as simple *signa,* but as the *vehicula et media collativa* offered equally to all communicants, to the faithful as to the unfaithful, to the former *ad veniam peccatorum*, to the latter *ad damnationem* [3].

Zwingli of Zurich [4], and OEcolampadius of Basle [5], the two leaders of the sacramentarian party, did not hesitate to follow out the principle of justification by faith alone to its logical conclusion, from which Luther had shrunk. In the

---

1. See *Letter to the Christians of Strasburg.* Cf. G. De Wette, *Luthers Briefe,* II, p. 577.

2. See *Apology of the Lord's Supper.*

3. See *Augsburg Confession,* art. X.

4. See *Fidei ecclesiasticae expositio,* p. 551. See also the memoir addressed *Illustrissimis Germaniae Principibus in conciliis Aug. congreg.*, p. 546.

5. See *De vero intellectu verborum : Hoc est corpus meum.*

mind of both these leaders, the Lord's Supper was nothing more than a symbol, signifying the shedding of the blood by Christ on Calvary. An engagement ring is treasured by a queen, merely because it reminds her of the royal spouse to whom she is united in marriage. So it is with the Eucharist. The bread and wine of the Lord's Supper are only the memorial of Christ's sufferings and death. The Eucharist is then a bare, empty symbol, entirely devoid of the reality which it signifies. However the two Swiss Reformers do not agree in explaining the words of the institution, « This is my body. » Zwingli takes the word *body* in its literal sense, but gives the verb *is* a figurative meaning, similar to that of the word *represent*. Œcolampadius, on the contrary, retains the literal sense of the verb *is*, but gives to the noun *body*, the metaphorical meaning of *figure of my body*[1].

Calvin seems to differ fundamentally with Luther and the Sacramentarians. He gives to the sacraments the highest possible dignity and attributes to them the greatest efficacy. However, in conformity with his theory of predestination, wherein grace is given only to the elect, he taught that the normal reception of the sacraments does not infallibly result in an effusion of grace. The efficacy of the sacraments which was so much extolled in the beginning, merely means therefore that the sacraments are ceremonies where only the predestined receive the grace of God.

This conception of the sacrament is perhaps even more incompatible with the doctrine of the real presence than the attitude of Zwingli and Luther. At least, it gave birth to an opinion midway between the two dominant conceptions of the Reformers. On the one hand, Calvin teaches that

---

1. This difference of explanation was, as will be seen, especially noted by the Council of Trent. The Council met the two theories of Zwingli and Œcolampadius, with two different words. The body of Christ, it defined, is *vere et realiter* present under the sacramental species, and not merely *in signo aut in figura*.

Christ is present in the Lord's supper and that the faithful receive Him in communion. On the other, he asserts that the bread and wine are mere signs of the body and blood of Christ, undergoing no change by reason of His presence in the Eucharistic banquet[1]. How can these two assertions be reconciled? Calvin attempts to do so, by declaring that a mysterious power, which emanates from the glorified body of Christ in heaven, is communicated to the soul of the faithful communicant at the very moment he eats the earthly elements of bread and wine. Although it remains in heaven, the life-giving body of Christ transmits its own virtue to the communicant. The soul of the latter is strengthened by Christ, just as his body is strengthened by the taking of the bread and wine : the faithful eat the body and drink the blood of the Lord. Thus, at one and the same time, Calvin denounces a merely symbolistic presence of Christ, and a real presence of His body and blood under the appearances of bread and wine. It can be easily seen how distasteful this doctrine was to the followers of Zwingli, who could not conceive of a dynamic action of the glorified body of Christ on our souls, and how especially hateful it must have been to the Lutherans, who saw therein a complete denial of the doctrine of the real presence. We might add here that without realizing how

---

1. *Instit.*, l. IV, c. XVII, 10, 32; « Our souls are not less nourished by the body and blood of Jesus Christ than is the life of our bodies sustained by the bread and wine..... If this seems incredible because the body of Jesus Christ is so far away from us, let us recall that the spirit truly unites things that are separated from it. Hence, in the Lord's supper, Jesus Christ signs and seals for us that participation in His body and blood, by which His life flows into ours, as though He had entered into our very bone and marrow. Not does He give us a sign that is empty and vain..... as long as it is only the faithful who share in this spiritual banquet..... Nor do we nourish our faith any less than those who think they bring Jesus Christ down from heaven. However, I frankly admit that I reject any such union of the body of Jesus Christ with our souls, which would necessitate a veritable distilling of the former, wherefore, it should be sufficient for us that Jesus Christ inspires life in our souls by the substance of His flesh : that His flesh distill His life in us, although it does not enter into us ».

far they were compromising their master's theory of predestinatianism, the Calvinists soon came to admit that the virtue emanating from the glorified body of Christ in heaven was present in the very bread itself, and received by everyone who ate of the Eucharistic bread.

At the opening of the Council of Trent, the teaching of the Reformers anent the Holy Eucharist was as follows. The Lutherans admitted that Christ was really present in the bread and wine. The Sacramentarians declared that the bread and wine either represented the body and blood of Christ, or were the figure of the same. The Calvinists claimed that the communicant received a virtue or power which emanated from the glorified body of Christ in heaven.

The definition of the Council of Trent. — The Council of Trent was called principally to investigate and condemn the doctrine of the Reformers. Their teaching on the Eucharist was taken up after the twelfth session.

At first, some theologians were appointed to draw up from the writings of the Reformers, the propositions that were deserving of condemnation. Ten were formulated, of which the first reads as follows : *In eucharistia non esse revera corpus et sanguinem neque divinitatem Domini Nostri Jesu Christi, sed tantum in signo.*

These ten propositions were then submitted to the Fathers of the Council, who, after examining them in several general meetings, decided that they were all heretical. These conclusions were examined and discussed by the theologians in a private meeting. The ten propositions were changed into twelve corresponding formulas of condemnation. The first formula was given as follows : *Si quis dixerit in sanctissimo eucharistiæ sacramento non contineri vere, et realiter et substantialiter corpus et sanguinem una cum anima et divinitate Domini Nostri Jesu Christi, ac proinde totum Christum; sed tantummodo esse ut in signo, vel figura aut virtute, sit anathema.*

The formulæ were again brought back and considered by

the Fathers of the Council in a few general meetings. They received their definite form and were promulgated in the solemn session of Oct. 10, 1551. The first formula has already been quoted in the beginning of these *Studies* on the doctrine of the real presence[1].

---

1. See A. Theiner, *Acta Concilii Tridentini*, post sess. XII, t. I, pp. 488-529.

CHAPTER III.

TRANSUBSTANTIATION.

Christ is really, truly and substantially present in the Eucharist. Consequently, the Eucharist is more than the sign or figure of Christ. It contains more than a mere spiritual power, emanating from the glorified body of Christ in heaven. How, then, is this presence of Christ on our altars brought about?

To this question, the Council of Trent has replied as follows : « Because Jesus Christ, our Redeemer, has said that what He offered under the appearance of bread was truly His body, the Church of God has always held it as certain, and the Holy Council declares it again, that by the consecration of the bread and wine, the entire substance of bread is changed into the substance of the body of Our Lord, and the entire substance of wine into the substance of His blood. This is what the holy Catholic Church has properly and fittingly termed *Transubstantiation*[1] ».

Since, in the opinion of the Fathers of the Council, it is

---

1. Sess. XIII, c. IV; DENZ., 877 : *Quoniam autem Christus, Redemptor noster, corpus suum id, quod sub specie panis offerebat, vere esse dixit, ideo persuasum semper in Ecclesia Dei fuit, idque nunc denuo sancta hæc Synodus declarat, per consecrationem panis et vini conversionem fieri totius substantiæ panis in substantiam corporis Christi Domini Nostri, et totius substantiæ vini in substantiam sanguinis ejus. Quæ conversio convenienter et proprie a sancta catholica Ecclesia transsubstantiatio est appellata.*

not sufficient to set forth the truth, without at the same time revealing and refuting the errors, the holy Council thought it well to add the following canon, so that after mastering the Catholic doctrine, all might be aware of the heresies that must be guarded against and avoided : « If anyone shall say that in the Most Holy Sacrament of the Eucharist the substance of the bread and wine exists along with the body and blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ, and shall therefore deny that marvelous and unique change of the entire substance of bread into the body, and of the entire substance of wine into the blood, a change which leaves behind merely the appearances of bread and wine, and which the Catholic Church has most fitly called *transubstantiation*, let him be anathema[1] ».

This canon contains, by way of denial, everything that was positively included in the former chapter, minus the affirmation relative to the permanent belief of the Church in the doctrine of transubstantiation.

According to this twofold definition, consecration leaves unchanged the appearances of the bread and wine. Color, taste, touch, form, weight, chemical composition or physical activities, all these are the same as before. The senses, which can perceive only the phenomena of things, continue to see bread and wine, and they are not deceived [2].

To these appearances corresponds a new reality, one

---

1. Denz., 884 : *Si quis dixerit in sacrosancto Eucharistiæ sacramento remanere substantiam panis et vini una cum corpore et sanguine Domini Nostri Jesu Christi, negaveritque mirabilem illam et singularem conversionem totius substantiæ panis in corpus et totius substantiæ vini in sanguinem, manentibus dumtaxat speciebus panis et vini, quam quidem conversionem catholica Ecclesia aptissime transsubstantiationem appellat : A. S.*

2. The three words, *appearances*, *species*, and *accidents* have not the same meaning considered in themselves, but they are none the less indiscriminately used in English to signify that which remains of the bread after transubstantiation. However, the word *accident* is philosophical, the word *species* liturgical, while the word *appearance* is the one most generally used in every-day speech.

which is perceptible by faith alone, viz., the body and blood of Christ.

What then has taken place?

By the power of the words of consecration, the *substance* of the bread, and the *substance* of the wine have been *changed* into the body and blood of Christ.

A *change* has taken place, that is, to say the least, there has been a succession of two things, and the second has been substituted for the first. The Council makes the existence of this change an article of faith, but it in no way defines the nature of this change, otherwise than by saying that it is wonderful and unique.

The *substance* of bread and the *substance* of wine, we said, have been changed into the body and blood of Christ. In using the word *substance*, the Council has in mind only the ordinary meaning of this word, namely, *that imperceptible reality which does not fall under the scope of observation, but which the intellect tells us exists in all things, as the basis and support of properties and sensible qualities.* In a word, it is the reality as distinguished from the appearances.

The Council declares that this change affects *all* the essential elements of the substance of the bread and *all* the essential elements of the substance of the wine, and not merely one or other of those essentially constitutive elements of the substance of bread or wine. For this reason the Council uses the word *transubstantiation*, which signifies the total conversion, the passing of the whole substance.

Such is the dogma of transubstantiation. As may be seen, the Council does purposely avoid wedding this doctrine with any one philosophical school. Most likely, the Fathers and theologians of the Council being acquainted only with Scholastic philosophy, borrowed from it the terms used to formulate the dogma. By the very fact, the Council refers us to Scholastic philosophy, that we may fully understand their mind, but especially that we may neither misrepresent nor

minimize it when explaining the Council's teaching. On the other hand, the Fathers took care to strip these words of their highly technical meaning, using them only in the sense that common every-day philosophy gives them, a sense easily understood and used by all, and one that is independent of any system, or rather, one which underlies all systems, since without it all systems would be a challenge to common sense.

We shall first prove the *fact of transubstantiation* and then investigate its *nature*. Next, we shall study the *character* and *permanence* of Christ's presence under the appearances of bread and wine.

ARTICLE I.

The fact of Transubstantiation.

General Idea. — When the Savior said at the last supper, « This is my body », and « This is my blood », His body and blood became present under the appearances of bread and wine, by the disappearance of the substance of bread and wine. In this way the first transubstantiation took place. Although Christ had revealed by these words not only His presence under the eucharistic symbols, but the way in which it was caused as well, it was not until much later that this unique and wonderful change was expressed in strictly definitive terms.

The New Testament. — Both in the Synoptics and St. Paul, we read that on the eve of His death, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to His Apostles, saying : « Take ye and eat : this is my body ». « Then taking the cup of wine, and giving thanks to God, He gave it to His disciples, saying, « Drink ye all of this; for this is my blood ». What the Savior had thus given His Apostles, to eat was

His body, what he had given was His blood to drink. Though the appearances remained, there was no longer present the bread and wine. Hence that which underlay the appearances of bread and wine must have been changed into the body and blood of Christ. Here we have a statement both of the fact itself and of the doctrine of transubstantiation.

These two conclusions are, of course, not explicitly formulated in Holy Scripture. Our Savior merely says : This is my body, This is my blood; He did not say therefore : this is no longer bread and wine; still less did He point out that a change had occurred. We must admit, however, that such remarks on the part of Our Lord, would have appeared superfluous, useless, and even strange. If this is the body and this the blood of Christ, it must follow that neither bread nor wine are any longer present, and that a change has taken place. To accept the first statement and then reject its two necessary consequences, would be a violation of common sense logic, the most necessary to interpret the Gospel, when once we have investigated and determined with strictly scientific methods the customs and manners of those times, the mode of writing of the evangelists, and the very meaning of the terms used [1].

Testimony of the Fathers of the first four centuries. — When the author of the *Didache* relates the Sunday synaxis [2], and St. Ignatius admonishes the faithful of Asia to unite with their bishops in the one same Eucharistic sacrifice [3], and

---

1. Duns Scotus, Durand, and Peter d'Ailly, taught that from Tradition alone we learn that the doctrine of transubstantiation can be proved from the words of the institution. According to Franzelin, (see *De Eucharistia* th. XV. p. 254 this interpretation is not incompatible with the doctrine of the Council of Trent. (See Sess. XIII. c. IV.) The great majority of theologians however teach that the words of the institution alone, apart from Tradition, sufficiently prove the doctrine of transubstantiation.

2. *Didach.*, XIV. See above, pp. 230-231.

3. *Smyrn.*, VIII. — *Philad.*, IV. See above, pp. 235-236.

when, again, St. Justin describes for Antoninus Pius, the Eucharistic ceremony[1], or when Tertullian later declares that the Christian is fed and fattened on the flesh of Christ[2], they are all more or less directly affirming the real presence of Christ under the appearances of bread and wine. They do not indeed explain the manner of this presence, but their intense realism sufficiently shows that they do not even entertain the notion of bread coexisting with the body of the Lord, where faith teaches that that body is present.

When, says St. Irenaeus, « the word of God » is pronounced over the offerings, « they become the Eucharist, the body and blood of Christ »[3]. Origen teaches the same doctrine in almost the very same terms[4]. The Anaphora of Serapion relates that after reciting the account of the institution, a prayer is addressed to God the Father asking Him to send His Word upon the bread, in order that it may *become* the body of the Word, and upon the chalice, that it may *become* the blood of truth[5]. When, as says St. Athanasius, those great and mighty prayers have been uttered, the bread *becomes* the body, and the wine *becomes* the blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ[6]. It is this holy doctor who adds that in the Eucharist, the body of Christ is given to us as food, πνευματικῶς that is to say in an incorporeal and spiritual manner[7]. All these testimonies show that the consecration brings about not a mere union of the bread with the body of Christ, but a true changing of the bread into the body of Christ. Although no precise description of this change is given, it cannot be denied that the Fathers refer to a conversion rather than to a mere union.

---

1. *Apol.* LXV-LXVII. See above, pp. 238-239.
2. *De resurrectione carnis*, VIII, See above, p. 271.
3. *Haer.*, l. V, II, 3. See above p. 251.
4. *Contra Celsum*, l. VIII, 33. See above, p. 255.
5. See above, p. 259.
6. *Sermo de paschate et de sacrosancta eucharistia*, 8. See above, p. 261.
7. Epist. IV, 19. See above, p. 261.

More explicit testimonies of the Fathers of the fourth century. — This antecedent probability becomes a certitude upon an examination of a few of the more explicit testimonies of the Fathers of the fourth century. Even if it would entail some repetition of texts quoted elsewhere, we must quote here texts of the fourth century Fathers.

« Since Christ has declared and said of the bread : « This is my body », teaches St. Cyril of Jerusalem, « who will henceforth dare to doubt? And as He has also said (of the wine) « This is my blood », who will ever dare to say that it is not His blood? In Cana of Galilee, Christ changed water into wine, which bears some resemblance with blood : shall we not then believe Him when He *changes* wine into His blood?..... Do not then consider merely the bread and wine as such, for they are, according to the words of Our Lord, His body and blood. Let your faith strengthen you to accept that which your senses do not perceive. Do not judge according to the taste, but be unhesitatingly assured by faith that you are called (to share) in the body and blood of Christ. Thus instructed and convinced that the bread which appears to be bread to the taste, is the body of Christ, and that the wine which by its flavor seems to be wine, is nevertheless the blood of Christ, strengthen your heart and approach this bread as (something) spiritual[1] ». Here is as clear and as popular an exposition of the doctrine of transubstantiation as can be found anywhere.

After showing in his *Catechetical Discourse*, how the Eucharist is the complement of the Incarnation, St. Gregory of Nyssa endeavors to explain the way in which the body of Christ becomes the Eucharistic body. During His mortal life, he says, Christ was nourished like all men with bread and wine. The latter elements were changed into His body. Similarly, in the Eucharistic sacrifice, bread and wine are changed into the body and blood of Christ « not, it is true,

1. Catech., XXII (mystag. IV); *P. G.*, XXIII.

by assimilation, but by the word of consecration [1]. » By this latter careful qualification, St. Gregory enables us to grasp the exact meaning of his comparison. The process of nutrition, he says in much the same words, helps us to gain some idea of that mysterious and unique way in which bread and wine are changed into the body and blood of Christ. « Even supposing that he did not express himself as completely as theologians were to do later », as one critic remarks, « still it remains true that he explicitly directed Christian thought towards the idea of transubstantiation. And in fact, where in nature could he have found an instance of what this word represents [2]? »

We may well quote again the words of St. John Chrysostom, which require no commentary : « Christ is here; the same Christ who formerly prepared the table (of the last supper) has prepared this one for you. He who changes the offerings into the body and blood of Christ is no mere man, but Christ Himself, who was crucified for us. The bishop is His representative, and pronounces the well known words, but it is the power and the grace of God (that accomplishes the mystery). « This is my body », he says, and straightway, these words effect a change (μεταρρυθμίζει) in the offerings. Only once were these words used (at the last supper) and ever afterwards, until the Savior shall come

---

1. *Orat. catech.*, XXXVII : « And, indeed, this body (the body of the Word made flesh) derived its strength from bread (ἄρτος τῇ δυνάμει ἦν) and was sanctified by the presence of the Word who dwelt therein. The same change whereby the bread changed (μεταποιηθείς) into His body received a communication of divine power takes place here. In the former case the body, which drew its substance (σύστασις) from the bread, and which in a sense was bread itself, became sanctified by the unction of the Word (ἅγιον ἐποίει). Here, in the words of the Apostle (I Tim., IV, 5) the bread is sanctified by the word of God, and by the invocation. It becomes the body of the Word, not by assimilation (οὐ διὰ βρώσεως προιὼν εἰς τὸ σῶμα γενέσθαι τοῦ Λόγου), but by the power of the word (ἀλλ' εὐθὺς προς τὸ σῶμα διὰ τοῦ λόγου μεταποιούμενος) which the Word Himself pronounced : This is my body. »

2. J. TIXERONT, *History of Dogmas*, t. II, p. 181-182.

again, do they produce the perfect sacrifice on the tables of our churches[1]. »

In the West, St. Ambrose excels both in clearness of thought and definiteness of expression all those who preceded him. « If the blessing of a man had such power as to change nature, what are we to say of that divine consecration where the very words of the Lord and Savior operate? For that sacrament which you receive is made what it is by the word of Christ. If the word of Elias had such power as to bring down fire from heaven, shall not the word of Christ have power to change the nature of the elements? Concerning the making of the whole world, you have read : The Lord spoke and all was made. He commanded, and they were created. Shall not the word of Christ, which was able to make out of nothing that which was not, be able to change things which already are, into what they were not? For it is not less to give a new nature to things to change them... The Lord says : This is my body : before the blessing of the heavenly words another nature is spoken of; after the consecration, the body of Christ is signified. Likewise he speaks of His blood : before the consecration, it has another name; after, it is His blood[1]. »

The Dogma of transubstantiation and Antiochean Christology in the fifth century. — The fourth and fifth centuries were the era of the great Christological controversies. The dogma of the Eucharist was too intimately bound up with Christological dogma, not to be affected by such questions. Towards 428, Nestorius, bishop-elect of Constantinople, revived the ideas of Theodore of Mopsuestia, and taught Christological dyophysism, that is to say the existence of two natures viz., hypostases in Jesus Christ. For proof of this doctrine he had recourse to a certain Eucharistic dyophysism.

---

1. *In prodit. Jud.*, homil. I, 6.
2. *De mysteriis*, IX.

In the Eucharist, he writes, the nature of bread and wine coexists with the body of Christ. Likewise in Christ, the nature or hypostasis of man coexists with the Word of God [1]. A similar doctrine is found in a work of Eutherius of Tyana, who was, with John of Antioch, the leader of the Nestorian party at the Council of Ephesus [2].

After the Councils of Ephesus and Chalcedon some theologians, in order to oppose monophysism more efficaciously, used the Eucharist as the type of Christ's inmost constitution. Unfortunately, in doing this, they went so far as to distort the significance of their example. Their argument was that just as, in the Eucharist after the consecration, there still exists one visible and tangible element, so in Christ even after the Ascension we must recognize the distinctive properties of His human nature. Within these limits their doctrine was perfecty acceptable. However, the logic of their argument demanded that this visible and tangible element in the Eucharist be not merely the sensible qualities of bread and wine, but a certain persistence of their sub-

---

1. See Nestorius, *Liber Heraclidis* : « Faith is one thing and nature another : he who says that those things, which are evident and well known as to their essence, are a certainother thing as regards faith, does not destroy the properties of nature, but merely endeavors to make others believe that such properties are not in nature..... For example, when he says over the bread : *This is my body* (Matth. xxvi, 26), he does not say that the bread is not bread, and that his body is not a true body, but when designating them he uses two words, « bread » and « body », which are essences. We know indeed that the bread is bread by nature and by essence. But when it is a question of believing that the bread is his body by faith and not by nature, he is trying to persuade us to believe in that wich does not exist by essence ; for the latter exists by faith and not by essence. If it were a pure question of essence, what need would there be for faith? Thus he does not say : believe that the bread is bread, because whoever sees bread, knows that it is bread. Nor does he have to force us to believe that the body is a body, for everyone sees and knows it to be a body What is not present (by essence) is therefore that which he asks us to believe (by faith), so that it comes through faith to those who believe. »

2. Eutherius of Tyana, *Confutationes*, ed. G. Ficker, Leipzig, 1908. See P. Batiffol, *Études d'Hist. et de Théol. posit. L'Eucharistie* [4], pp. 435-440.

stance. In fact, the illustrious Theodoret, bishop of Cyrus[1], and Pseudo Chrysostom[2] appear to have made this mistake, whilst Pope Gelasius, notwithstanding what some critics say to the contrary, insisted constantly on the permanence of the sensible qualities alone[3].

St. Cyril of Alexandria. — While Nestorius claimed that the bread and wine continued in their own nature, St. Cyril of Alexandria affirmed that when the bread and wine became the body and blood of Christ, the former ceased to have any real existence. In commenting on the words of the last supper he writes : « Taking the cup, the Lord gives thanks, that is He speaks to His Father in prayer, in order that He may join with Him in the gift of the lifegiving Eucharist, which He was giving to us. At the same time, He shows us by His example, that we ought to give thanks before breaking and distributing the bread. It is for this reason that we place the elements (of bread and wine) before God, and earnestly

---

1. See Eranistes, dial. I; *P. G.*, LXXXIII, 56 : « Christ has wished those who share in the divine mysteries, not to cling to the nature of things they perceive, but after the change of names, to believe in the transformation effected by grace. For He who has called His natural body, wheat and bread, and who has spoken of Himself, as the vine, has indeed honored visible symbols with the name of body and blood, not that He has changed their nature (οὐ τὴν φύσιν μεταβαλών), but because He has added grace to nature » : — dial. II, p. 169 : After the consecration, the mystic symbols do not lose their own nature (Οὐδὲ γὰρ μετὰ τὸν ἁγιασμὸν τὰ μυστικὰ σύμβολα τῆς οἰκείας ἐξίσταται φύσεως); they continue in their former substance, in their appearance and shape, and are as visible and tangible as before. It is through thought alone that we know what they have become, that we believe them to be such, and that we adore them as they exist in our faith. Compare the image with its archetype, and you will see the resemblance, for there must always be a likeness between the figure and the reality. Indeed, this body has its former shape, appearance, figure, in a word, its corporeal nature. After the resurrection, it has become immortal and incorruptible, is seated at the right hand of God, and is adored by the whole of creation. »

2. *Epist. ad Caesar. P. G.* LII, 758.

3. *Tract. III de duabus naturis, ed.* Thiel, p. 541, 542. Cf. J. Lebreton, *Le dogme de la transsubstantiation et la christologie antiochienne du Ve siècle*, *Études*, 1908, t. CXVII pp. 489-491.

pray that the may be changed for us into a spiritual Eucharist, so that by receiving them, we may be sanctified both in body and in soul. Then pointing to (the elements) He says : « This is my body » and « This is my blood », *that we may not imagine this to be a mere figure* (ἵνα μὴ νομίσῃς τύπον εἶναι τὰ φαινόμενα) but the true body and blood of Christ, made present by the ineffable power of an omnipotent God (μεταποιεῖσθαι εἰς σῶμα καὶ αἷμα Χριστοῦ κατὰ τὸ ἀληθὲς τὰ παρενηνεγμένα), and so that we who communicate, may receive the lifegiving and sanctifying power of Christ »[1]. It is impossible to speak more clearly or in more explicit terms. The consecrated bread and wine are not a mere figure; they have been truly changed into the body and blood of Christ.

However, the controversy between Nestorius and St. Cyril of Alexandria was dealing less with the real presence and its mode of existence, than with the efficacy of communion. In conformity with his teaching on Christological dyophysism, Nestorius distinguished in the Eucharist, the divinity and the body of Christ. That the Christian ate the flesh of Christ could be said, but he would in no way countenance the idea of eating His divinity; on the other hand he asserted that the body of Christ could in no way vivify the communicant. In conformity with his Christological doctrine, which is none other than the traditional one, St. Cyril of Alexandria replied that in the Eucharistic as well as in the historical Christ, no such separation of the humanity and the divinity is possible, and that if the body of Christ gives life in the Eucharist, it is because it is united to the divinity[2].

---

1. *Comment. in Matth.* XXVI, 7; *P. G.*, LXXII, 452.

2. The Council of Egypt called together by Cyril at Alexandria (430) pronounced in its pastoral, against the Eucharistic doctrine of Nestorius. When, « we partake of the mystic food, and are sanctified (by its reception), we partake of the sacred flesh and the precious blood of the Savior; we certainly do not receive an ordinary flesh, nor even (the flesh) of a man who would have been sanctified or joined to the Word by a bond of dignity, or in whom God had dwelt, but the

From St. Cyril of Alexandria to Peter Lombard. — In the fifth century (between 452 and 487), Faustus, bishop of Riez in Provence, wrote a remarkably precise summary of the doctrine of the Eucharist in his homily *Magnitudo cælestium beneficiorum*. The invisible priest, he says, changes the visible elements into the substance of His body and blood (*visibiles creaturas in substantiam corporis et sanguinis convertit*), when He says : Receive ye and eat, this is my body, or again, Take ye and drink : this my blood ». In another place, Faustus speaks of these visible things as the substance of bread and wine (*substantia panis et vini*). He also speaks of the substitution of the body and blood of Christ for the substance of the bread and wine. « Before the invocation of the holy name, he says, the substance of the bread and wine is present; afterwards, it is the body and blood of Christ ». Are we to wonder, he adds, that the Lord is able to change by a word those things which He has already created by a word? A perfect victim is there, which must be seen with the eyes of faith, and not judged by its appearances (*perfecta hostia fide existimanda, non specie*)[1].

(truly lifegiving (flesh, the very flesh of the Word..... For how could the flesh of a man be lifegiving by its nature? » *Synodic. epist.*, 7; Mansi, *Concil.*, t. IV, p. 1077. In his *Anathematisms* 11 and 12, Cyril condemns any one who does not admit that « the body of the Lord is lifegiving because it is the body of the Word », and because the Word, « is life and lifegiving in as much as He is God ». Denz., 123-124. See J. Mahé, *L'Eucharistie d'après saint Cyrille d'Alexandrie*, *Revue d'Histoire ecclésiastique*, t. VIII, pp. 676-696. — P. Batiffol, *Études d'Hist. et de Théol. posit., L'Eucharistie*[4], pp. 451-453.

1. Epist. seu homil. XXXVIII; *P. L.*, XXX. 271-275 : *Et quia corpus assumptum ablaturus erat ab oculis nostris, et sideribus ablaturus, necessarium erat ut nobis in hac die sacramentum corporis et sanguinis sui consecraret,... ut quia quotidiana et indefessa currebat pro hominum salute redemptio, perpetua esset etiam redemptionis oblatio, et perennis illa victima viveret in memoria... Vera unica et perfecta hostia, fide existimanda, non specie; nec exterioris censenda visu hominis, sed interioris affectu... Recedat ergo omne infidelitatis ambiguum, quandoquidem qui auctor et muneris, ipse et etiam testis veritatis. Nam visibilis sacerdos, visibiles creaturas in substantiam corporis et sanguinis sui, verbo suo, secreta potestate, convertit, ita dicens : « Accipite et comedite, hoc est corpus meum. » Et sanctificatione repetita :*

The Sermon of the bishop of Riez reminds us of the *De Mysteriis* of St. Ambrose. On the other hand, the precision which he gives to the Eucharistic language of St. Ambrose, is due to his knowledge of the writings of St. Cyril of Alexandria. Thus, the word *convertere* is the exact equivalent of μεταποιεῖσθαι, used by the great Alexandrian; *visibiles creaturæ* are an echo of the τὰ φαινόμενα and *secreta potestas* is the translation of τὶ ἄρρητον τοῦ πάντα ἰσχύοντος Θεοῦ. Moreover, better than any of his predecessors, he has clearly distinguished in the bread and wine, that which is external, that the senses perceive, the sensible qualities, the appearances, the *species*, from that which is underneath, not perceived by the senses, but by the intelligence or faith, namely : the substance, *substantia*[2].

From Faustus of Riez, then, who so happily used and developed the principles of St. Ambrose and St. Cyril of Alexandria, we have inherited the terms which will interpret and express definitely the scriptural and traditional dogma of transubstantiation. In the ninth century, the texts of Faustus of Riez, then called Eusebius of Emesia, were quoted by Paschasius Radbert in his refutation of Ratramnus[3]. Haimo, bishop of Halberstadt, used them in a slightly condensed form and therein found the formula which most nearly approached

---

« *Accipite, inquit, et bibite, hic est sanguis meus.* » *Ergo ut ad nutum præcipientis Domini, repente ex nihilo substiterunt excelsa cælorum, profunda fluctuum, vasta terrarum : ita parem potentiam in spiritualibus sacramentis verbis præbet virtus, et rei servit effectus... Nec dubitet quisquam, primordias creaturas, nutu divinæ potentiæ, præsentia summæ majestatis in Dominici corporis transire posse naturam, cum ipsum hominem videat artificio cælestis misericordiæ Christi corpus effectum... Quando benedicendæ verbis cælestibus creaturæ sacris altaribus imponuntur, antequam invocatione sui nominis consecrantur, substantia illic est panis et vini, post verba autem corpus et sanguis est Christi. Quid autem mirum est, si ea quæ verbo potuit creare, verbo possit creata convertere!*

2. See P. Batiffol, *Études d'Hist. et de Théol. posit., L'Eucharistie*[1], pp. 455-457.

3. Paschas., *Epist. ad Frudegar., P. L.*, CXX, 1354.

the idea of transubstantiation, before the advent of the word itself[1]. In the eleventh century Witmundy, bishop of Aversa, will make use of these same texts to refute the disciples of Berengarius[2]. They will also be found in the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard[3].

In the meantime, the word transubstantiation was coined. We meet with it for the first time in a sermon on the text of the prophet Osee, *In manibus prophetarum assimilatus sum, dicit Dominus*, once attributed to Hildebert of Lavardin († 1133), but which now seems to have been the work of Peter Comestor († 1179)[4].

The Berengarian Controversy. — As we have already remarked, Berengarius renewed in the eleventh century the controversy which had arisen in the ninth between Paschasius Radbert and Ratramnus[5]. In particular he attacked the doctrine of the abbot of Corbey touching the conversion of the bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ, because he considered such teaching as the cause of the prevailing ultra-realism in the Eucharistic doctrine of his contemporaries. Since, he says, the senses continue to perceive the appearance of bread and wine in the Eucharist, we must equally admit

---

1. Haymo., in *P. L.*, CXVIII, 815-816 : *Credimus et fideliter confitemur et tenemus quod substantia illa, panis scilicet et vini, per operationem divinæ virtutis, ut jam dictum est, id est natura panis et vini substantialiter convertantur in aliam substantiam, id est carnem et sanguinem... Commutat ergo invisibilis sacerdos suas visibiles creaturas in substantiam suæ carnis et sanguinis, secreta potestate. In quo quidem Christi corpore et sanguine, propter sumentium horrorem sapor panis et vini remanet et figura, substantiarum natura in corpus Christi et sanguinem omnino conversa ; sed aliud renuntiant sensus carnis, aliud renuntiat fides mentis.*

2. Witmundy, *De corpore et sanguine Domini*, l. III ; *P. L.*, CXLXIX, 1484.

3. *In IV Sent.*, dist. VIII, q. II, a. 1.

4. Hildebert, Sermo XCIII ; *P. L.*, CLXXI, 776 : *Cum profero verba canonis, et verbum transsubstantiationis, et os meum plenum est contradictione et amaritudine et dolo, quamvis eum honorem labiis, tamen spuo in faciem Salvatoris.*

5. See above, p. 293.

the continued existence of the substance of bread and wine. Indeed the substance of a thing and its sensible appearance are inseparable, and admit only of a logical distinction. As for the substance of the body and blood of Christ, it is invisibly united to the substance of the bread and wine[1].

The theory of Berengarius was a sort of impanation. Several important treatises were published to refute it, the most celebrated of which was the *De corpore et sanguine Domini adversus Berengarium Turonensem*[2], by Lanfranc, abbot of Le Bec. Lanfranc adopted the ideas of Paschasius Radbert, and asserted that by the power of the words of consecration, the substances of bread and wine are changed into the body and blood of Christ. Only the species of bread and wine, — the word « species » was the one in common use at this time — remain and conceal the body and blood of Christ. The Lateran Council, in 1079, condemned the doctrines of Berengarius, and forced him to sign a profession of orthodoxy[3].

This repudiation proved to be less a submission of his intellect than a mere concession to public opinion. Berengarius explained his action later on, using terms that justify the gravest suspicions[4]. The doctrines of the headmaster of Tours continued to be taught, and were propagated by those prolific spreaders of so many other heresies, the Albigenses. As a consequence, the fourth Lateran Council in 1215 had to define the doctrine of transubstantiation. In doing so, it used the very word *transubstantiation*[5], the first time it had ever appeared in a canonical text.

---

1. See Martène and Durand, *Thesaurus novus anecdotorum*, t. IV, col. 109-113.

2. *De corpore et sanguine Domini*, IX ; *P. L.*, CL, 420.

3. Denz., 355.

4. See Martène and Durand, *Thesaurus novus anecdotorum*, t. IV, col. 107.

5. Denz., 430 : *Una vero est fidelium universalis Ecclesia, extra quam*

The Theory of Impanation or Companation. — Luther and his followers have always maintained that the bread and wine are present together with the body and blood of Christ. In their theory, the real presence takes place not in virtue of the conversion of bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ, but by a union of the latter with the former. They differ, however, as to the nature of this union.

According to Osiander, one of the first disciples of Luther, there takes place a hypostatic union between Christ and the bread and wine. Christ could thus truly say at the last supper: This is my body, this is my blood. This is the theory of impanation. The Word is made bread, just as the Word was made flesh. As the hypostatic union of the Word with human nature was called incarnation, so the hypostatic union of the body with the bread can be called impanation.

According to Luther, there is merely an accidental union between the bread and wine, and the body and blood of Christ, so that Christ can be said to be *with, under* and *in* the bread. This theory is called consubstantiation or companation, because the substance of bread and wine is believed to co-exist with the substance of the body and blood of Christ.

For some time, owing, no doubt, to the objections of the Sacramentarians, Luther believed it necessary to teach the ubiquity of Christ's humanity. The humanity of the Savior, he said, was endowed with the divine attributes, with divine immensity and omnipresence, and therefore, since Christ's humanity is everywhere, it is also present in the Eucharistic bread and wine. Perceiving however that this theory led him absolutely to denature the doctrine of the real presence,

---

nullus omnino salvatur, in qua idem ipse sacerdos est sacrificium Jesus Christus, cujus corpus et sanguis in sacramento altaris sub speciebus panis et vini veraciter continentur, transsubstantiatis pane in corpus, et vino in sanguinem potestate divina : ut ad perficiendum mysterium unitatis accipiamus ipsi de suo, quod accepit ipse de nostro.

Luther hastened to abandon it, and to return to his former opinion.

The Definition of the Council of Trent. — After the twelfth session, as we have said, theologians[1] were appointed to extract from the works of the Protestants all the points of doctrine that deserved condemnation.

Twelve propositions were presented for discussion, the third of which summed up the doctrines of Osiander and Luther. « In the Eucharist », it reads, « there is no such thing as transubstantiation, but we must believe that the body and blood of Christ exist together with the substance of bread and wine; however, the substance of bread and wine is hypostatically assumed by the humanity of Christ so that He could truthfully say, at the last supper : This is my body, this is my blood. » Here, we have the theory of Osiander.

In summing up the doctrine of Luther, the theologians were careful to place before the Fathers of the Council, during their dogmatic discussions, the motives which had determined the famous reformer to separate himself from the true faith of the Church. « In his *Testament of the Sacrament of the Altar,* they wrote, Martin Luther speaks as follows : I recognize that in this sacrament, we truly eat and drink the body and blood of Christ, present in the bread and wine. Then in his *Assertions,* he writes : When I perceived the nature of that Church which had defined transubstantiation, namely the Aristotelian and Thomistic Church, I became bolder, and I, who once hesitated between the stone and the altar, at last espoused the belief that the true body and blood of Christ are in the true bread and wine, and not merely under the accidents of bread and wine[2] ».

This third proposition was then discussed by the Fathers of the Council. The debate was rather quiet, and there is

---

1. See above, p. 298.
2. See A. Theiner, *Acta Concilii Tridentini*, post sess. XII, t. I, p. 488.

nothing special to remark save the following thrice repeated declaration : « We are not here to hear and decide Scholastic controversies, but to judge and condemn heretics [1] ».

Worthy of note is this remark of the General of the Augustinians, which modern slanderers of the dogma of transubstantiation would do well to consider, in order to learn whence the Church draws her dogmas. « Our faith must be valued not by what it could have been, but by what it actually is in Scripture and Tradition. Now traditional faith is faith in transubstantiation. If, however, faith is valued by what it might have been, we can truly say that Christ could have been united to the bread by a sort of hypostatic union » [2].

The theories of impanation and companation were unanimously condemned by the Fathers. A definition was reached towards the end of the ninth general meeting, and was couched in its present form at the end of the twelfth meeting. It was solemnly promulgated together with the doctrine of the real presence. We have already quoted it at the beginning of the chapter on transubstantiation.

ARTICLE II.

The Nature of Transubstantiation.

General Idea. — By the very power of the words of consecration the body of Christ is present under the appearances of bread, and His blood under the appearances of wine.

This presence results from the conversion of the entire substance of the bread and of the entire substance of the wine into the body and the blood of Christ : a wonderful and unique conversion, which the Church has called *transubstantia-*

---

1. See A. Theiner, *Acta Concilii Tridentini*, post sess. XII, t. I, pp. 502, 504.
2. *Ibid.* p. 515.

tion. We shall now see how such a conversion or transubstantiation takes place, in other words we shall study the nature of transubstantiation.

In treating this question, we shall draw upon the philosophy of the Schoolmen, which alone seems able to explain the dogma of transubstantiation in as much as it can be explained. Both Descartes and Leibnitz have attempted a different explanation based on their respective philosophy. Their theories are at present rejected by all theologians; we shall however give a brief analysis of them, thereby showing that, though the doctrine of transubstantiation is sufficiently well explained by the Schoolmen, *still it is not necessarily bound up with any system of philosophy.*

The teaching of the Schoolmen. — In the substantial change which takes place in the Eucharist, resulting in the presence of the body and blood of Christ under the appearances of bread and wine, there is, as in all substantial changes, an *initial term,* called the *terminus a quo*, a *final term,* called the *terminus ad quem*, and the act by which the initial term ceases, and the final term becomes present, which act is called the *transubstantiating* act. What is the nature of these two terms and of the transubstantiating act, according to the teaching of the Schoolmen?

The initial term. — The initial term is both the bread and wine, namely two material substances or bodies. Let us consider only the substance of bread; the substance of wine may be easily analysed afterwards by analogy.

Like all material substances, the substance of bread is composed of two essential elements : the matter, and the specific form of bread. From the substantial union of these two elements results the quantity or extension of the substance, with its three dimensions, and its own relief, its weight, density, location in space and time, and finally local motion, and physical and chemical properties; also

various qualities such as color, smell and taste. Hence in the bread, there is something fundamental and something accessory. The former is the substance strictly so called; the latter we call accidents.

No matter how intimate may be the union between substance and accidents in a body, it is never so close as to render the separation of substance and accidents impossible. In other words, the accidents could continue to exist in a body even if the substance ceased to be what it is. The only condition required would be that the Creator cause the substance to disappear, and act for the accidents the part that was previously played by the substance.

What is possible for all material substances, is actually realized in the substance of the Eucharistic bread, when God, at the word of His priest, performs the transubstantiating act.

The final term. — The direct term of transubstantiation is the substance of the body and blood of Christ. Since, however, Christ is indivisible, it follows, in virtue of natural concomitance, that along with the substance of the body and blood of Christ, we have His whole body and all His blood: His blood is there together with His body, His body together with His blood, and with both there is His soul. Then, because of the hypostatic union, with His body, blood and soul, there is His divinity. Consequently, the concrete final term of transubstantiation is Christ entire.

It is Christ whole and entire, with the selfsame body He received from the blessed Virgin Mary, and in which He suffered, died, and rose from the dead. On the evening of the last supper, it was Christ with His passible and mortal body. On our altars, it is Christ with His risen and glorified body. In the sacrament of the Eucharist, therefore the body of Christ is impassible, i. e. exempt from all pain and corruption; it is subtle, namely capable of penetrating other bodies, as an imperceptible fluid; it is agile, namely able to travel

without fatigue or hindrance and in the twinkling of an eye through measureless distances; it is luminous, shedding brightness on all sides as a star which pours forth torrents of light without ever exhausting itself.

The concrete term of transubstantiation is, then, Christ entire with His true, risen and glorified body under the accidents of bread and wine. After transubstantiation, the substances of bread and wine have disappeared, and yet their accidents remain what they were before. The extension of the substance of the bread therefore remains, and consequently its color, smell and taste. Not being changed in themselves, these accidents maintain with regard to surrounding bodies the same relation they had when they existed in their own substance. They keep their weight and density; they nourish him who partakes of them, or gradually become corrupted. Extension or dimensive quantity is the accident in which all the others inhere.

What, however, is the power which assumes the rôle of substance in regard to dimensive quantity? It cannot be the body of Christ, otherwise, the accidents would belong to the body of Christ in the same way that they belonged to the substance of bread before transubstantiation. Then again, if they were the accidents of Christ's body, we should say that the body of Christ has extension, height, breadth, color, smell, taste; that His body is broken or altered. Such a mode of speech would be too realistic and false. Christ's body therefore does not play the rôle of substance; the accidents of bread and wine do not become the accidents of the body of Christ; they remain after as before transubstantiation, the accidents of bread and wine. The energy which supports extension and thereby all the other accidents is, as St. Thomas remarks, the omnipotence of God [1].

If, however, the body of Christ does not play the rôle

1. *Sum. theol.*, III, q. LXXVII, a. 1.

of substance with regard to the accidents of bread and wine and if there is no relation of substance to accident between them, there exists, nevertheless, between the two, by the positive ordinance of God, a most intimate union. The latter is called a sacramental union, and it implies a twofold relation between Christ's body and the foregoing accidents. The first is a relationship of inseparability, whereby the body of Christ remains united to the accidents, until they become corrupted. The second is a symbolistic relationship, whereby the Eucharistic accidents manifest the presence of Christ. In a word, the body of Christ, without fulfilling the function of substance, is present to the Eucharistic accidents after the manner of a substance. It is whole and entire under the accidents, and under each one of their parts.

The Transubstantiating act. — What is the nature of the act, whereby the substance of bread and wine disappears, and the substance of Christ's body and blood, and consequently Christ whole and entire, becomes present under the accidents of bread and wine?

Conversion is a change, whereby one thing ceases to be what it was, and becomes another thing which previously it was not. The change is substantial, when a substance becomes another substance. It is accidental, if, while the substance remains the same, the accidents become other accidents. Undoubtedly, transubstantiation is a substantial conversion.

Transubstantiation is, however, no common ordinary substantial conversion such as occur every day. In these changes, the form alone is replaced by another form, while the matter remains the same, being the subject common both to the former object and the latter. In transubstantiation, the entire substance of the bread and wine, both matter and form, is changed into the body and blood of Christ. Transubstantiation is a substantial conversion not only formal, but entire. It is an extraordinary, supernatural

conversion; wonderful and singular, *mirabilis et singularis,* as the Council of Trent said[1].

In the fourteenth century, Durand of St. Pourçain, bishop of Meaux, claimed that, in this total conversion, the substance of the bread and wine became the true body and blood of Christ, by a process of assimilation, similar to that which goes on in our own bodies, when the food we have received is changed into our substance. This crude interpretation of transubstantiation is not absolutely contrary to the definition of the Council of Trent, since it declares that the substance of bread and wine as such disappears. But it is uncalled for and gratuitous. If some Fathers, as St. Gregory of Nyssa[2], have compared the conversion in Eucharist to a sort of digestion, whereby the bread and wine are transformed into the body and blood of Christ, they are merely using a figure of speech.

According to Scotus, the transubstantiating act is only a substitution of substances. By one act, God annihilates the substance of bread and wine; by another, He substitutes the body and blood of Christ for the substance that has disappeared. Scotus adds, however, that the substance of the bread and wine does not disappear absolutely, but only conditionally, that is, in order that the substance of Christ may become present where before we had the substance of the bread and wine. Thus, the two acts form one economy, the sole term of which is the relation of presence of the body and blood of Christ under the acidents of bread and wine[3].

This explanation is very simple and has been adopted by such eminent theologians, as Vasquez[4] and Cardinal de Lugo[5]. Most modern authors likewise favor it. There is

---

1. Denz., 884.
2. See above, p. 307.
3. See *In IV Sent.*, dist. XI, q. III.
4. See *De Eucharistia*, disp. CLXXXI, c. XII.
5. See *De Eucharistia*, disp. V, sect. 6.

alleged against it, however, an objection, which at first sight seems quite serious. The Council of Trent declares very explicitly that the entire substance of bread and wine is *changed* into the substance of the body and blood of Christ. Now a substitution is not a conversion. — The Scotists will admit that their substitution is not a conversion, properly so called, but, they say, the Council speaks of this conversion as wonderful and singular, thus denoting a conversion *in the broad or analogical sense*, and to this their substitution aptly corresponds. Although this response clearly indicates that the Scotist explanation is not contrary to the doctrine of the Council of Trent, still we prefer the explanation of St. Thomas, as truer and more in conformity with the dogma of transubstantiation. It is indeed more mysterious, but perhaps for that very reason much nearer the truth[1].

According to the teaching of the Angel of the School, the transubstantiating act is a conversion strictly so called. The difference between this system and the preceding lies in this, that, while there are two distinct and successive, though coordinated acts in a substitution, there is only one in a strict conversion. The one same and indivisible act causes the substance of the bread and wine to disappear, and the substance of the body and blood of Christ to become present. It is in this way that the same chemical combination changes wine into vinegar: *Corruptio unius est generatio alterius*[2].

This is the doctrine of the Schools regarding the nature of transubstantiation. It is evidently based on that philosophical conception of the composition of bodies known as Hylemorphism. If another philosophy be adopted, then another explanation of the nature of transubstantiation must be sought, which of course would be of little or no value,

---

1. See L. Billot, *De Sacramento Eucharistiæ*, q. lxxv, 2.

2. Cf. *Sum. theol.*, III, q. lxxv, a. 1-4. Cf. L. Billot, *De Sacramento Eucharistiæ*, q. lxxv, § 4. — L. Gaillot, *Catechismus theologicus, De Eucharistiæ sacramento*, pp. 76-81.

if in establishing or justifying it, the dogma were to be minimised.

The Cartesian explanation of the dogma of Transubstantiation. — Scholastic philosophy proceeds from facts, as experienced by the exterior and interior senses, to the knowledge of principles. Such is really the characteristic feature of their method.

From the fourteenth century, perhaps, there were more principles admitted than experience justified. Deserved or not, this was the reproach levelled by Descartes against the Schoolmen in the beginning of the seventeenth century. In opposition to them, Descartes advanced a new system of philosophy based upon the evidence of the following twofold and purely experimental facts : I think and I am.

From this he drew three conclusions. First, while the essence of the soul is thought, the essence of the body is concrete localized extension. Just as we have no such things as extension without body or empty space, so we cannot have a body without extension. Secondly, the only property of extension is movement. The variety of properties in the same body is explained by the diversity of its movements. Hence, movement can neither exist nor be thought of without extension. Thirdly, the soul is nothing else than thought, and the body is only extension in motion. Hence there is no common point or no direct relation between spirit and extension. All the sensations that the mind experiences such as color, smell, taste, etc., are phenomena which take place in the mind, because of movements which have been produced in extension. In this way the mind acquires knowledge of bodies.

It is clear enough that these three conclusions are incompatible with the dogma of transubstantiation, at least, as explained by the Scholastics. If concrete localized extension is an essential part of a body, how can it remain when the substance of that body disappears? Moreover, if the modi-

fications which take place in a body result from the different motions of the extension, motions which can neither exist nor be thought of without extension, it is evident that the disappearance of the substance of bread necessitates the disappearance of the extension of the bread and of all the other accidents. Inversely it is equally plain that the presence of the body of Christ necessitates the appearance of the extension of the body of Christ and of all the accidents of this body, including that final determination which localizes it.

In spite of these difficulties, Descartes deemed that his philosophy fully accounted for the doctrine of transubstantiation as defined by the Council of Trent. He develops this doctrine in his *Réponses aux quatrièmes objections d'Arnauld.*

The Council of Trent defined that the entire substance of bread disappears, and in its place the body of Christ becomes present. Descartes declared that his philosophy was in no way incompatible with this proposition. After transubstantiation, the Fathers of the Council added, « only the species or appearances of bread and wine remain ». Descartes rightly remarked that the Council merely declared the fact of the continuance of the species or appearances, without saying anything as to their nature. Here, he said, was an important point. The word species or appearances may designate two things. One is what the Scholastics call the accidents, namely, the extension and the motions to which this extension is subjected, — but the permanence of such accidents is impossible, when the substance has disappeared; or again, the name of species or appearances may designate the surface of the substance of the bread, which, according to Cartesian philosophy, can remain, even when the body has disappeared, provided it be sustained by the power of God.

---

1. See *Œuvres de Descartes, ed.* V. Cousin, t. II, pp. 78-88.

We now come to the most difficult part of this explanation. In what does the above surface of a body consist according to the Cartesian philosophy? We must first of all remember that according to Descartes, there is no such thing as empty space. Consequently the gap which lies between the extension of this bread, for example, and my own body is filled with atoms, which belong to other bodies, such as oxygen and nitrogen. Likewise the intervals between the atoms of the bread, which we are considering, are filled with atoms of oxygen and nitrogen. Those atoms which are in direct contact with the bread, and which consequently take the shape of the bread, form the surface of the bread. It is this surface which remains after transubstantiation. Before transubstantiation, this surface was maintained by the extension of the bread; after transubstantiation it is maintained by the omnipotence of God. Before transubstantiation, the motion imparted to the extension of the bread was transmitted first to the surface of the bread, then to the other atoms, and finally to our senses. By means of this impression, our mind experienced the so-called sensations of bread. After transubstantiation, the same motions continue to proceed from the surface of the bread, though now empty of its natural content, and affect our senses. Our senses continue therefore to be affected as before, and our soul is cognizant of the same sensations.

Far then from rejecting the doctrine of transubstantiation, Descartes appears rather to see in this mystery an argument in favor of his philosophy. « All of which (the different aspects of the doctrine of transubstantiation), he writes, seem to me to be suitably accounted for by my principles, that I not only do not fear that I have offended the theologians, but hope, on the contrary, that they will be thankful for my physical theories as being much more consistent with theology that those ordinarily proposed[1] ».

1. See *Œuvres de Descartes*, *loc. cit.*, p. 83. It is true that in his *Réponses*

Leibniz and the doctrine of transubstantiation. — Although a Lutheran, Leibniz tried for four years to harmonize the principles of his philosophy with the doctrine of transubstantiation, as he declares in a letter to Arnauld [1].

According to Descartes, bodies are nothing more than extension in motion and the basic element of all motion, the atom. Leibniz, on the contrary, asserts that bodies are not composed of moving atoms, but of spiritual forces or monads. These monads, in virtue of a pre-established harmony, are active along parallel lines and exercise no influence on one another. Likewise, the body taken in its totality, exercises no influence on the surrounding bodies. Man differs from other beings, in that he possesses a very highly perfected spiritual monad, which through the knowledge it has of itself, knows the monads which constitute its own body and

---

aux quatrièmes objections d'Arnauld, Descartes maintains a negative position, merely striving to show the complete conformity of his philosophic system with the Church's doctrine of transubstantiation. Arnauld declared himself satisfied. Bossuet was none the less so, happy, he said, to know that Descartes admitted with the rest of Catholics « the real absence of bread, and the real presence of the true body of Jesus Christ. » See *Examen d'une nouvelle explication du Mystère de l'Eucharistie*, p. 17, published by E. Levesque, 1900. Unfortunately Descartes went further. Carried away by the hope that his system would solve the mystery, he attempted a more positive and complete explanation: after transubstantiation, he claimed, the bread still remains. God however organizes it after the manner of a human body, and it then becomes animated with the soul of Christ. Thus the bread truly becomes the body of Christ. Descartes expounded his new system to P. Mesland, S. J., in two letters, which were to remain confidential if the latter judged it opportune. However, the communication must have been revealed either by Descartes himself or by P. Mesland, to some friends, for the copies multiplied and quickly fell under the notice of Bossuet. This new explanation was entirely different from the first. Bossuet had no difficulty in pointing out the discrepancies. The theory cannot be accepted, he said, for if the bread is organized as a human body, and animated by the soul of Christ, then the bread is changed into the body of Christ. But this Eucharistic body is not the same body born of the Virgin Mary, the one which suffered and died, and is now in its glory in heaven, as the Council of Trent has declared. See *ibid.*, pp. 18-20.

1. Cf. J.-A. Emery, *Pensées de Leibniz sur la religion et la morale*, dans *Exposition de la doctrine de Leibniz sur la religion*, pp. 417-420.

the bodies that surround it. In this system extension is a pure illusion; nothing corresponds to it in the objective order.

In applying this philosophy to the dogma of the Eucharist, Leibniz declared that in transubstantiation, the forces which make up what is called the substance of bread disappear, and are replaced by the forces which constitute the body of Christ. The body of Christ is present under the appearances of bread in this sense, that the body takes with reference to the surrounding bodies and the mind of man, relations of coexistence and simultaneousness in time, which were previously realized by the substance of bread. It follows from this that the body of Christ is with regard to surrounding bodies and the mind of man, in a relation exactly similar to that of the substance of bread before transubstantiation. On the other hand there is no change in the mind of man. In presence of the body of Christ as previously in presence of the substance of bread, that mind continues to have the same phenomena of perception. Faith alone tells it that behind these phenomena there is no longer bread, but the body of Christ [1].

Philosophical and Dogmatic Conclusions concerning the doctrine of transubstantiation. — The philosophy of Leibniz and that of Descartes on the nature of bodies are as much if not more at variance, the one with the other, as they are both with the philosophy of Aristotle and St. Thomas. Nevertheless Leibniz and Descartes thought that not only did their theories on the composition of bodies not contradict the dogma of transubstantiation, but that they threw a new light upon it. The Church on the other

1. See Leibniz, *Lettre à Arnauld*, published by J. A. Emery, *op. cit.*, *loc. cit.* — *Lettres à Pélisson*, published by F. De Careil, *Œuvres de Leibniz*, t. I, pp. 227-231, pp. 309-316, extracts of which have been given by J. Baruzi, Leibniz, I, pp. 249-253. — *Système de Théologie, de la transsubstantiation*, published by J. A. Emery, *op. cit.*, pp. 223-267.

hand has never attempted to condemn these two systems of thought, nor to reject explanations formerly advanced by theologians who took their inspiration from those principles. Although she favors the philosophy of Aristotle and of St. Thomas, she welcomes any other system of philosophy, provided it maintain that the real presence is effected through the disappearance of the entire substance of the bread and wine, the species alone remaining, and through the appearance of the body and blood of Christ, with His soul and divinity. To meet with these requirements, such a system of philosophy must admit the objective reality of substances and the real distinction between substance and its accidents or phenomena. If, on the contrary, it be maintained with Kant, that substance is undoubtedly a necessary conception in the realm of thought, but one to which it is not certain that anything corresponds in objective reality, this is to admit a principle incompatible with the doctrine of transubstantiation. This adaptability to all the great systems of philosophy is a proof that the dogma of transubstantiation is not indissolubly bound up with any one in particular, and that it is not born of any human philosophy, but has for its fountainhead, the revealed teaching of Our Lord, as recorded in the Gospels.

ARTICLE III.

The manner of Christ's presence under the accidents of bread and wine.

General Idea. — Transubstantiation is the conversion of the entire substance of bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ, the accidents only of the bread and wine remaining. After transubstantiation, Christ is wholly and entirely present under the Eucharistic accidents. We have yet to examine the manner of our Lord's presence in the Eucharist.

The definition of the Council of Trent. — The very metaphysics and sublimity of the doctrine itself, make it imperative for us to find out first what the Church imposes upon our belief in this matter.

The definition of the Council of Trent is very clear and precise : « If anyone shall deny that in the Eucharist Christ is entirely present under the appearance of bread and entirely under the appearance of wine, or entirely under each one of the particles of either species, let him be anathema[1]. »

As we have already explained, [2] Christ whole and entire is Christ with His body, His blood, His soul and His divinity. It is Christ with the self same body He received from the Blessed Virgin Mary, and in which He suffered, died and rose again. It is Christ with this body, in its actual state. The night of the last supper, it was Christ with His passible and mortal body; on our altars, it is Christ with His risen and glorified body, endowed with all the properties of risen bodies. Now according to the definition of the Council of Trent, Christ is present whole and entire under the appearance of bread, Christ is present whole and entire under the appearance of wine.

Moreover, the Council defines that Christ is present whole and entire under each one of the separated particles of either species.

It was a question much mooted about the time of the Council of Trent, and one not definitively settled by the Fathers, whether Christ is whole and entire under each one of the particles before the separation.

Some theologians of the Council took the affirmative stand, because they absolutely identified the manner of Christ's presence under the appearances of bread and wine,

---

1. Denz., 885 : *Si quis negaverit, in venerabili sacramento Eucharistiæ, sub unaquaque specie et sub singulis cujusvis speciei partibus, separatione facta, totum Christum contineri : A. S.*

2. See above, p. 320.

with the presence of any material substance in its extended parts, or with the manner of presence of the soul in our body. Others were, to say the least, hesitating. If, they said, Christ is present under the appearances of bread and wine, it is only in virtue of a positive will of God. Hence the manner of His presence can only be analogous to that of a material substance in its extended parts, or to that of the soul in our body. To-day there is no controversy, and it is generally admitted as certain that Christ is whole and entire under each particle of either species, even before any division.

Another question dividing theologians at the time of the Council of Trent was, whether Christ is entire under each one of the separated particles of both species, even when these particles are almost invisible or intangible, existing, so to speak, as dust, and scarcely perceptible to the senses. Those, of course, who claimed that Christ is present wherever we have the accidents of bread and wine, no matter how imperceptible these accidents may be, favored an affirmative settlement of the question; the others asserted that Christ's presence is connected with the accidents, only inasmuch as these accidents are sensible signs, and not merely *physically,* but *morally,* sensible signs i. e. sensible signs as commonly understood in everyday speech. This must be so, they said, in order that Christ under the appearances of bread and wine may be a sacrament as well as a sacrifice. The Council of Trent did not wish to settle the dispute, and it remains the same to-day as it was in the sixteenth century. Since the first opinion has some degree of probability, the Church prescribes the careful purification of the sacred linens and vessels.

Theological Explanation. — The Schoolmen teach that the soul is entirely present in our whole body, and in each divisible part of our body. Since the soul is the principle of all bodily activity, it is necessary indeed that it be pre-

sent in the body, wherever there be activity, that is to say, in our whole body and in each one of its parts. *In toto corpore et in qualibet parte corporis.* On the other hand, the soul has no parts; it is simple and therefore not only undivided but indivisible. If, then, it is in our whole body, it is whole and entire in our whole body, *tota in toto corpore.* Likewise, if it be in all the parts of the body, it must be whole and entire in each part of the body, *tota in qualibet parte corporis*[1].

It was upon this mode of presence of the soul in our body, that the Schoolmen conceived and explained the presence of every material or corporeal substance in its extension or body. The substance of a gold nugget, for example, is entirely present in the body of the nugget and in each one of its parts, no matter how it may increase or decrease. Now Christ is present entirely under the accidents of bread and wine, after the manner of the substance of the bread and of the wine. He is therefore present entire under the accidents of bread and wine, and under each particle of these accidents. He is present entire under the accidents of bread and wine, no matter how multiplied or divided they may be.

An objection. — Although Christ is present after the manner of a substance under the accidents of bread and wine, He is not present merely in His substance. He is present, we

---

1. Because the human soul is entirely present in the whole body, it does not follow, however, that it is equally present in all the parts of the body. Its ordinary centre so to speak, is in the principal parts of the body, v. g. the brain and the heart, whence it flows into the secondary parts, its presence in the latter being dependent on its presence in the principal parts. Likewise, the soul is not present in all the parts of the body with all its faculties. It is present with all its faculties only in the organ with which it forms one principle of action, and which it uses to perform its several operations. This teaching is expressed by the School in these words : *Anima est tota in toto corpore, et tota in qualibet parte corporis, secundum totalitatem essentiæ sed non secundum totalitatem virtutis.*

remarked, in His entirety, and consequently with His bodily extension. Now, the mode of presence of bodily extension is unlike the mode of presence of a substance, since the dimensive extension is present entire in a determined place, and each part of the extension, likewise, is situated in a determined place. In other words, bodily extension always occupies one fixed place and cannot be in any other place at the same time, and the same holds true for each of the parts of this extension. How then can we explain that Christ present entire and consequently with His bodily extension, can be in many places at one and the same time?

The two solutions of St. Thomas and Suarez. — In accordance with the laws of nature, a body is only in the one place that encloses it, and cannot be in another at the same time; this law of localization is universal. Even a resurrected body, as the body of Christ, though of course it can pass very rapidly through many places, cannot be in more than one at the same time. How then can the Eucharistic body of Christ be entire in many places at one and the same time?

Two solutions have been advanced, one by St. Thomas, the other, by Suarez. St. Thomas teaches that the body of Christ is not present in the Eucharist after the mode of presence that it possesses in heaven. In heaven, it is present after the mode of its nature, with its full size, and with all the visible qualities which distinguished it while on earth; and it appears to the blessed, just as it did to the disciples after the resurrection[1]. In the sacrament of the Eucharist, the body of Christ is entirely present under the accidents of bread and wine, but it is there entire after the mode of presence of a substance. Christ is present with His substance, which of course includes His corporeal extension, but the latter is here found stripped of its normal mode of existence,

1. Cf. *Contr. Gent.*, l. IV, c. LXIV : *Corpus enim Christi per suas proprias dimensiones in uno tantum loco existit* [*scilicet in cœlo*].

so that it, too, is present after the mode of a substance. The characteristic of such a mode of presence is to be free from the law of localization, and consequently to be able to be present in many places at one and the same time[1].

Suarez' solution is slightly different. He distinguishes between what he calls the essential part of extension, or internal extension, and the accidental part or external extension. The former is the ontological distribution of the substance of a body, with its separate parts distributed according to the order proper to the nature of that body. The latter is only the final determination which localizes internal extension. In other words, external extension is the relation to space with its objective foundation, or the *esse ad* together with the *esse in* of spatial relation[2].

Suarez applies his theory to the body of Christ as fol-

---

1. *Sum. theol.*, III, q. LXXVI, a. 3, 4 : *Corpus Christi est in hoc sacramento per modum substantiæ, id est per modum quo substantia est sub dimensionibus; non autem per modum dimensionum, id est non per modum illum quo quantitas dimensiva alicujus corporis est sub quantitate dimensiva loci. Manifestum est autem quod natura substantiæ tota est sub qualibet parte dimensionum, sub quibus continetur, sicut sub qualibet parte panis est tota natura panis. Et hoc indifferenter, sive sint dimensiones actu divisæ (sicut cum panis secatur) vel etiam sint actu indivisæ, divisibiles vero potentia. Et ideo manifestum est quod totus Christus est sub qualibet parte specierum panis, etiam hostia integra manente et non solum cum frangitur..... Quantitas dimensiva corporis Christi est ibi concomitanter et quasi per accidens : ideo quantitas dimensiva corporis Christi est in hoc sacramento non secundum proprium modum (ut scilicet sit tota in toto et singulæ partes in singulis partibus), sed per modum substantiæ, cujus natura est tota in toto, et tota in qualibet parte.* Thus the substance of a body is whole and entire in that body and in every part of that body. This is the usual mode of presence peculiar to material substance. We conceive it, as we have seen, as analogous to the soul's mode of presence in our body. It is far different with the quantity or corporeal extension of a material substance. Here the normal law of localization demands that quantity or extension be confined to a determinate position of space in such a wise that its various parts also occupy their corresponding positions in that space.

2. See *Metaph.*, disp. LI, *De ubi*, sect. I. See also on this subject the book of D. Nys, entitled : *La notion d'espace au point de vue cosmologique et psychologique*, ch. I, pp. 32-63, Louvain, 1901.

lows. In heaven Christ's body possesses both its internal and external extension, and is thus localized in space. In the Eucharist, it possesses only internal extension, and as such can exist in many places at once [1]. Perhaps, this explanation does not essentially differ from the one advanced by St. Thomas. It has however this appreciable advantage, that it fits in better with the exposition of the mystery.

After thus setting forth these two solutions of St. Thomas and Suarez, it is here again necessary to remark that though the body of Christ does not play the rôle of substance as regards the accidents of bread and wine, it is none the less united to these accidents as inseparably as was their own substance [2].

In spite of a seeming contradiction in terms, we can therefore safely assert that the body of Christ, although not localized, is present where, before, we had the substances of bread and wine, and where the accidents of bread and wine remain. Theologians express this distinction by saying that the body of Christ in the Eucharist is localized not in itself, or directly, but indirectly or by means of the accidents of bread and wine. Thus indirectly localized, the body of Christ is indirectly subject to local motion, and we can truly say that it is carried by the priest, or raised at the elevation, or exposed on the altar [3].

Jesus in the Eucharist. — Entirely present after the

---

1. See *De Eucharistia*, disp. XLVIII, *De comparatione utriusque praesentiae*, sect. I.

2. See above, p. 322.

3. On the one hand, the body of Christ in the Eucharist does not play the rôle of substance in regard to the Eucharistic accidents and on the other, it is truly present to the accidents of bread and wine, after the manner of their own substance. It cannot be separated from them until these accidents deteriorate. The Eucharistic accidents manifest the presence of Christ's body, and the latter, though not localized under the accidents of bread and wine, is nevertheless present wherever these accidents are, no matter how multiplied or fragmentary they may be.

From these two statements, each of which checks whatever is too absolute

manner of substances, under the accidents of bread and wine, or present entire, although lacking external extension, the body of our Savior possesses all its natural proportions. But because it is without any direct spatial relation with surrounding bodies, it does not fall within the province of the senses. It can be perceived directly by creatures only by the light of glory or by faith[1]. The apparitions of Jesus in the Eucharist are in most cases but miraculous representations of an entirely subjective nature. To this subjective miracle there may and often does correspond an objective miracle, consisting in a preternatural modification of the Eucharistic species. There is nothing merely fictitious in all this, since to these signs there always corresponds the presence of Christ in His fullness[2].

---

in the other, we may infer the following rule : *In speaking of the Eucharist, we must not attribute as proper to the body of Christ, qualities which belong to the Eucharistic accidents only in as much as they are the accidents of the substance of bread and wine. However, we may attribute to the body of Christ those qualities which are proper to the Eucharistic accidents, considered either as sensible signs of Christ's presence, or as parts of local extension confined to a determinate space.*

This general rule resolves itself into three particular rules : 1st rule : *Every change of the Eucharistic accidents in space can be properly attributed to the body of the Savior.* Thus it can be correctly said that the body of Christ is raised at the elevation, exposed on the altar, and carried by the priest.

2nd rule : *The sensible qualities of the accidents of bread and wine, such as their color, odor, taste, dimensions, weight and density, cannot properly be attributed to the body of Christ. They can, however, be improperly assigned, by virtue of the figure of metonymy where the container is spoken of for the thing contained, or the garment for the individual clothed therein.* Thus, though the expression is not properly correct, we can figuratively say that we see or touch the body of Christ in the Eucharist. Reserve in using such metaphorical language is recommended.

3rd rule : *The physical or chemical phenomena which may take place in the accidents of bread and wine, must not in any way be attributed to the body of Christ.*

Thus one may not say that the body of Christ is broken when the host is broken; ground by the teeth, or digested in the stomach.

1. *Sum. theol.*, III, q. LXXVI, a. 7.

2. *Ibid* a. 8.

One might ask whether the Savior acts in His sacramental state, and, if He does, what manner of operations He performs. It is certain that the Savior can perform all those functions which do not depend for their exercise upon the external senses, such as wishing, loving, offering Himself in sacrifice, adoring, giving thanks, and praying. Those operations which require the cooperation of the external senses such as seeing, speaking, hearing, He cannot perform except by a miracle, for in order to use its external senses, a body must have its organs localized, set in space, and placed in spatial relationship with other bodies. Since, however, miracles are the normal thing in the mystery of the Eucharist, we need not be surprised if this last miracle be continually performed; we may well believe then that in the Eucharist Jesus sees us, hears us, and even could speak to us [1].

ARTICLE IV.

The permanence of Christ under the accidents of bread and wine.

General Idea. — After having studied the final term of transubstantiation which is Christ in His fullness under the accidents of bread and wine, we have investigated the nature of Christ's presence under these same accidents; we must now examine the duration of Christ's presence under the sacred species. We shall then have sketched as completely as possible the portrait of Our Lord in the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar.

We shall first outline the *history of this doctrine*. This

---

1. Dalgairns, *Holy Communion*, t. I, ch. iv, *Life of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament*.

will help us to understand how unwarranted an innovation was the Protestant theory and how well grounded was *the definition of the Council of Trent.* In conclusion we shall set forth a few *liturgical rules.*

History of the doctrine. — The elements transformed into the Eucharist are given to the faithful, writes St. Justin, and are carried to those absent through the ministry of the deacons [1]. Tertullian is witness to the custom of preserving the Holy Eucharist at home during the persecutions, in order that the faithful might communicate privately [2]. St. Cyprian likewise alludes several times to this domestic communion [3]. Clement of Alexandria relates that it was customary in his time to permit the faithful to take part of the Eucharist home with them [4]. These testimonies sufficiently show that in the second and third centuries, they believed in the permanence of the real presence after the celebration of the holy mysteries.

The edict of Constantine in the year 313 granting the Church freedom of worship, sanctioned the erection of public basilicas by the Christians. The holy Eucharist was preserved in these basilicas. After the communion of the faithful, we read in the *Apostolic Constitutions,* the deacons gathered the remaining particles and placed them in a sacred place called *Pastophoria* εἰς τὰ παστοφόρια [5]. From this time on the history of the doctrine of the permanence of Christ's body forms one with that of the manner of reserving the holy Eucharist [6].

In the eleventh and twelfth centuries the question arose

---

1. *Apol.*, LXVII.
2. *De Oratione*, XIX.
3. *De Lapsis*, XXVI.
4. *Strom.*, l. I, c. 1; *P. G.*, VIII, 692.
5. *Const. Apost.*, l. VIII, c. XIII.
6. See J. CORBLET, *Histoire du Sacrement de l'Eucharistie*, t. I, l. XII.

as to what becomes of the body of Christ in the stomach of the communicant. Hugh of St. Victor gave the solution, stating that the body of Christ ceases to be present, when the accidents of the bread and wine are corrupted [1].

In the thirteenth century a further question was debated, viz., whether the corruption of the accidents is the only cause of the cessation of the real presence. St. Thomas replied that only one thing could bring about the cessation of the real presence, namely, a substantial change in the accidents [2]. St. Bonaventure held a different opinion. He claimed that the real presence ceases by a substantial change of the accidents, but also if the host were to be devoured by an animal and, generally speaking, whenever the accidents, for one reason or another, cannot be given to the communicant as food [3]. This opinion has been considered erroneous since the definition of the Council of Trent.

The Protestant Theory. — The Lutherans denied the permanence of the real presence under the accidents of bread and wine.

According to some, the real presence takes place only at the moment of communion. The body of Christ *praesens est tantum in usu, dum sumitur.* According to others, the real presence lasts from the consecration to the communion, but ceases in the hosts that remain after communion.

This theory has no foundation in history. It is a novator's work. The Lutherans were led to adopt it, only because they wished to destroy the worship rendered to the Blessed Sacrament, which, especially since the thirteenth century, had assumed greater and greater importance.

---

1. *De Sacramentis*, l. II; pars VIII, c. XIII; *P. L.*, CLXXVI, 471.
2. *Sum. theol.*, III, q. LXXX, a. 3.
3. *In IV Sent.*, dist. XIII, a. II, q. I, concl., *ed.* Vivès, t. V : *Ratio autem quæ hos [opinantes] movet, est, quia Christus non est sub illo sacramento nisi eatenus, quod ordinabile est ad usum humanum, scilicet ad manducationem.*

The definition of the Council of Trent. — « Let him be anathema », declares the Council of Trent, « who says that the body of Christ is not present in the Eucharist after the consecration, or that the body of Christ does not remain in the hosts or in the particles of the hosts which remain after communion [1] ».

As may be seen, both forms of the Lutheran doctrine are here condemned.

A few Liturgical Rules. — The Church teaches that the body of Christ remains present under the accidents of bread and wine until the latter are corrupted. On the other hand, it is the common opinion of physicians to-day, that a small host can lie undigested in the stomach of a normal man, for half an hour, and a large host for an hour [2].

These two facts have given rise to the following liturgical rules : 1. The general rule is that the Eucharistic species must not be allowed to corrupt in any other way than by consumption in communion. 2. In order to avoid all other corruption, the Congregation of Rites has prescribed the renewal of the sacred species every eight days. The Ordinary of each diocese may however, extend this period. In no case, prescribe the Synodal Statutes of the diocese of Paris, should the renewal of the sacred species be delayed more than fifteen days [3].

3. An exception to the general rule is made in the case of a sick person who could not retain the consecrated host. If the host is rejected, it must be placed in a vessel contain-

---

1. Denz., 886 : *Si quis dixerit, peracta consecratione, in admirabili Eucharistiæ sacramento non esse corpus et sanguinem Domini Nostri Jesu Christi, sed tantum in usu, dum sumitur, non autem ante vel post, et in hostiis seu particulis consecratis, quæ post communionem reservantur vel supersunt, non remanere verum Corpus Domini : A. S.*

2. Unleavened bread is made of starch and gluten. The former is digested by the saliva, which acts very slowly, the gluten is digested by the gastric juices which secrete very feebly in a fasting stomach. Hence the digestion of the Eucharistic accidents requires quite a little time.

3. *Synodal Statutes*, n. 296.

ing a little water, and set in a decent place. The same thing must be done for profanated hosts, when there is reason to believe that they have been poisoned. When in the above cases, the sacred species have undergone an alteration, the whole thing must be cast into the piscina or the fire. If the consecrated wine has become poisoned, for example by reason of the copper oxide in the cruets, it too must be placed in a vessel until it turns to vinegar and then cast into the piscina or the fire.

4. In other cases than those for wich liturgical rules make provision, common sense interpreting faith should be our guide[1].

---

1. In the new Code of Canon Law, there is a censure of excommunication reserved to the Pope *specialissimo modo* for one who would subject the consecrated hosts to great profanation, viz., to profanations different from receiving holy communion in state of sin. See Cod. J. C., can. 2320. Such would be the crime of a person who would scatter the sacred species on the ground and a fortiori, who would submit them to vile treatment; such would also be the crime of him who would carry them away or keep them for an evil purpose.

CHAPTER IV.

THE SACRAMENT OF THE EUCHARIST.

Sacraments are sensible signs which under God's action produce in the soul the grace they signify. Being the efficient instrumental causes of a special grace, they all contain this grace, at least in a virtual manner.

As we already remarked[1], when discussing the economy of this mystery, the Eucharist while a sacrifice is at the same time a sacrament.

That the *Eucharist is a sacrament* is *an article of faith*, just as the fact that the *Eucharist is a sacrifice*[2]. It is a sacrament in which Christ Himself acts not merely as the principal efficient cause of grace, but also as the instrumental efficient cause. Christ indeed becomes present under the appearances of bread and wine, to enter into us, by communion, and to produce in us the grace of supernatural nourishment, which will at once refresh, strengthen and increase the supernatural life within us.

The sacrament of the Eucharist can be described as a sacrament of the New Law, instituted by our Lord to signify

---

1. See above, p. 170.

2. The sacramental character of the Eucharist was defined by the fourth Council of Lateran. See *Denz.*, 698; it was defined several times by the Council of Trent. See *Denz.*, 844, 874, 930, 932. See p. 425, the definition of the Eucharist as a sacrifice.

and produce a grace of supernatural nourishment. It signifies this grace by the appearances of bread and wine which contain the body and blood of Christ. It produces this grace by communion. In other words, we can define it : *Sacramentum Novae Legis a Christo institutum, quo, per species panis et vini, continentes Christum, significatur et, mediante sumptione, producitur gratia nutritionis supernaturalis*[1].

Since the Eucharist is a sacrament, we should find in it what we find in every sacrament, namely, the *constitutive elements* of a sacramental rite, and the *peculiar and distinct effect* produced for the benefit of the *recipient*. Then, a chapter on the *worship due to the Most Blessed Sacrament* will bring the subject to a close.

ARTICLE I.

The constitutive elements of the Sacrament of the Eucharist.

The matter and form of the Sacrament of the Eucharist. — « There is this difference », writes St. Thomas, « between the sacrament of the Eucharist and other such sacraments as baptism and confirmation, that the latter are realized only when they are applied to the recipient, whereas the sacrament of the Eucharist exists when the words of conse-

1. Although the sacrament of the Eucharist consists of two really distinct parts, namely the species of bread which contain the body of Christ, and the species of wine which contain His blood, it is numerically and specifically one. This must be so, since the species of bread and wine containing the body and blood of Christ, are the sacramental sign that produces one and the same sacramental grace, the grace of supernatural nourishment. Besides, if the species of bread and wine both signify the first effect of the sacrament, viz., the body and blood of Christ they signify however the same Jesus Christ, Our Lord, the same, passion of our divine Savior, and the one same Eucharistic banquet which is the pledge of one and the same heavenly glory. See Suarez, *De Eucharistia*, disp. XXXIX, sect. 3.

cration have been uttered over the bread and wine[1] ». This is so because from that very moment the first effect of the sacrament is attained, the one which the sacramental sign aims at first of all, viz., the presence of the body of Christ under the appearances of bread and wine. The attainment of this first effect independently of the second, viz., the sacramental grace conferred in communion, is sufficient for the existence of the sacrament.

The proximate matter of the sacrament of the Eucharist, that namely which enters into the constitution of the sacrament, consists therefore of the sacramental species and the body of Christ. It is controverted whether these two are present as the matter of the sacrament in exactly the same manner and degree. Suarez teaches that they are[2], Cardinal de Lugo holds that the body and blood of Christ are the primary, and the sacramental species, the secondary matter[3], while according to Bellarmine it is just the reverse[4].

What is certain is that in the sacrament of the Eucharist Christ Himself wishes to act, under the species of bread and wine, as the efficient instrumental cause of grace. The sacramental species do not therefore in point of fact constitute the rite productive of grace. On the other hand the body of Christ is not visible in itself in the Eucharist, but

---

1. *Sum. theol.*, III, q. LXXIII, a. 1, ad 3um : *Hæc est differentia inter eucharistiam et alia sacramenta habentia materiam sensibilem, quod eucharistia continet aliquid sacrum absolute, scilicet ipsum corpus Christi ; aqua vero baptismi continet aliquid sacrum in ordine ad aliud, scilicet virtutem ad sanctificandum. Et ideo sacramentum eucharistiæ perficitur in ipsa consecratione materiæ ; alia vero sacramenta perficiuntur in applicatione materiæ ad hominem sanctificandum. Et ex hoc sequitur alia differentia, nam in sacramento eucharistiæ, id quod est res et sacramentum, est in ipsa materia ; id autem quod est res tantum, est in suscipiente scilicet gratia quæ confertur. In baptismo autem utrumque est in suscipiente, scilicet et character, qui est res et sacramentum, et gratia remissionis peccatorum, quæ est res tantum. Et eadem ratio est de aliis sacramentis.*

2. *De Eucharistia,* disp. XLII, sect. 3, n. 2.

3. *De Eucharistia,* disp. I, sect. 3, n. 36-39.

4. *De Sacramento Eucharistiæ*, I. IV, c. VI.

only through the appearances of bread and wine, and therefore if the body of Christ causes the sacrament of the Eucharist to be an efficient cause of grace, it does not make it a sensible sign of that grace. But the essence of a sacrament lies in the fact that it is a sensible sign productive of grace, and therefore it seems that we should adopt the opinion of Suarez, declaring that the sacramental species and the body of Christ enter equally into the composition of the sacrament. We must, however, consider that if, from one point of view, the sacrament of the Eucharist produces grace only because the sacramental species contain the body and blood of Christ, from another, the body of Christ is already the first effect of the sacrament. Consequently it would seem exact to say with Bellarmine that the body of Christ is only the secondary matter of the sacrament. The proximate matter therefore of the sacrament of the Eucharist is made up of the sacramental species in as much as they signify and contain the real presence of the body and blood of Christ, *Consistit in speciebus consideratis in recto, et connotantibus in obliquo corpus et sanguinem Christi.*

We have yet to consider the *remote matter* of the sacrament of the Eucharist, i. e. the bread and the wine, also the qualities they must possess in order to be fit matter for the sacrament. We shall then consider the *form* of the sacrament, which consists in the words of consecration.

§ I.

The Remote Matter of the Sacrament of the Eucharist.

The Decree to the Armenians. — According to the four accounts of the institution of the Eucharist, the Savior took bread and giving thanks, gave it to His Apostles, saying, « Take ye and eat, this is my body. » Then taking the chalice of wine, and pronouncing the blessing, He likewise gave it to His Apostles, saying, « Drink ye all of this; for this

is my blood. » Then He added the words : « Do this in memory of me. » Thus according to the command of our Savior, bread and wine alone can be changed into the body and blood of Christ. In other words, the remote matter of the sacrament of the Eucharist can be only bread and wine.

This too has been the traditional interpretation of the precept of our divine Master. Since the time of Christ but one further determination has been made, which however is contained in the command of Christ, namely, that the bread should be of wheat, and the wine made from grapes. A few bishops of Africa, in the third century, thought it possible to consecrate bread and water. They were victims of a purely personal idea, and were quickly reproved for it by St. Cyprian. Their example was followed by no one. Neither is there any authority for the statement that in the celebration of the Eucharist, the early Christians used wine or water indiscriminately, as though only the idea of the banquet were of any importance [1].

When therefore the Council of Florence addressed a few practical instructions to the Armenians in the year 1439, it was only summing up the doctrine of Scripture and Tradition, in saying that the « matter of the sacrament of the Eucharist is, on the one hand, wheaten bread, and, on the other, wine from the vine, to which a little water must be added before the consecration [2]. » This doctrine is an *article of faith,* if not because it is contained in the decree to the Armenians, at least because it is clearly taught in Scripture and Tradition. Moreover, the Council of Trent has expressly defined that transubstantiation consists in the

---

1. This queer view was advocated by A. Harnack in a treatise entitled : *Brot und Wasser, die eucharistichen Elemente bei Justin,* in *Texte,* etc. t. VII, 2. See further, the doctrine of St. Cyprian.

2. Denz., 698 : *Tertium est* Eucharistiae *sacramentum cujus materia est panis triticeus et vinum de vite, cui ante consecrationem aqua modicissima admisceri debet.*

conversion of the entire substance of the bread and the entire substance of the wine [1].

In a subject of such importance it was, however, pre-eminently necessary for the Church to interfere, even in the matter of details, in order to prevent all abuses. She has therefore prescribed certain practical rules, *some of which concern the bread, others the wine, and still others the consecration of the bread and wine.*

Practical Rules concerning the Eucharistic bread. — Some of these rules refer to conditions for *validity*, while others are concerned with conditions for *liceity*.

Conditions for Validity. — 1. The bread should be made chiefly of wheaten flour and natural water. Bread made with oatmeal, barley, or black wheat, called buckwheat, cannot be validly consecrated. Were rye bread to be used, the consecration would be doubtful and in practice should be considered null. Moreover, no bread can be used in which there is any other flour besides that of wheat, unless it be present in a very small quantity.

2. The bread must be sufficiently baked in the oven. A dough of wheaten flour kneaded with water would not be bread and consequently could not be consecrated.

3. Any change which would cause the bread to corrupt would make for invalid matter. If the bread were only slightly changed, for instance, if it were only in the first stages of corruption, it would still be valid. However, the celebrant could not knowingly consecrate it without committing a mortal sin, unless he were forced to do so for some very grave reason [2].

Conditions for Liceity. — 1. The Council of Florence commands priests of the Latin rite to use unleavened

---

1. Denz., 877, 884.

2. A general rule is that hosts should not be used more than one month after they have been made. Lehmkuhl cites the case of a pastor who ordered

bread, and those of the Greek rite to use leavened bread[1].

An exception is made for a priest of the Latin rite, who after having consecrated the bread and wine, finds that the unleavened bread, which he has just consecrated is corrupted, and who has only leavened bread wherewith to finish the sacrifice. Moreover, a priest of the Latin rite may say Mass with leavened bread, if he is in a country where the Latin rite does not exist.

2. The hosts should neither be broken nor stained. They should be circular in form, and larger for the priests than for the faithful. When no large host is at hand, a priest can celebrate with a small host, even outside the case of necessity. If there is any danger of scandalizing the faithful, the priest is bound to explain his action to them[2].

Practical Rules concerning the Eucharistic wine. — *Conditions for Validity :* 1. The wine should be wine made with grapes, and not with any sort of fruit.

2. The wine should be pressed from ripe grapes; the juice extracted from unripe grapes is not wine.

3. There should be no substantial change in the wine. Such a change can take place in two ways : either by the wine turning to vinegar, or by its being mixed with too great a quantity of water.

4. It is the opinion of some theologians, that if a priest should pronounce the words of consecration over frozen wine, there would be no consecration, since frozen wine does not constitute valid matter. The great majority

---

his curates to use hosts made three months previously, in winter, and six months, in summer. The Congregation of Rites, when consulted about this, replied by condemning the practice, and releasing curates from any obedience to their pastor on this point. See *Theol. mor., De SS. Eucharistiae sacramento.* n. 163.

1. *Denz.*, 692.

2. See A. de Liguori, *Theol. mor., De Eucharistia*, n. 205.

assert, on the contrary, that frozen wine is valid matter, and consequently that it can be consecrated. All agree, however, that frozen wine would not be licit matter[1].

Hence, some other wine should be taken, or the former should be melted by warming the chalice, as prescribed by the rubrics, when the species becomes frozen after consecration.

Conditions for Liceity :

1. It is forbidden to use wine which has begun to sour or corrupt. The priest who would celebrate with wine that is even only slightly soured, would commit a grave sin, according to the rubrics of the Missal.

2. Except in case of necessity no one should use must or sweet wine, although this is real wine and sufficient for valid consecration.

3. It may be asked whether raisin wine is licit matter. The answer is no, if the raisin wine be made according to the processes of modern industry; such wine would be certainly illicit, and perhaps even invalid. Time and time again, however, the Holy Office has allowed missionaries to use a raisin wine made under the following conditions. The dried raisins must be placed in cold water for seven, eight or ten hours at the most; the surplus water should then be poured off and the raisins dried, and pressed [2].

4. Generally speaking, the Mass wine should not be mixed with any other liquor. To prevent the deterioration of certain wines, however, especially in transportation, the Holy Office, on July 30, 1890, and also on August 5, 1896, has permitted the mixture of alcohol and wine, provided the alcohol itself is made from wine, is added at the moment of fermentation and does not exceed twelve per cent

---

1. If a priest should illicitly consecrate frozen wine, says St. Liguori, the wine must be regarded as validly consecrated, since the contrary opinion has no sufficient foundation. See *Theol. mor.*, *De Eucharistia*, n. 207, quaeritur 2.

2. See C. Gennari, *Consultations*, 1st. part : Moral, t. II, consult. CVI.

of the total liquid. If the wine already possesses more than twelve per cent of alcohol, it can be increased to seventeen or eighteen per cent.

It may also be asked whether the custom of mixing four or five grams of tannin to a hectolitre of wine, or of adding forty or fifty grams of tartaric acid is permissible? The latter at least, was forbidden by the Holy Office in a decree of May 9, 1892[1].

5. The priest is bound *sub gravi* to add a little water to the wine at the offertory. This ceremony, however, is not necessary for the validity of the sacrament, but only for its liceity. One or two drops of water suffice. It is not known exactly just what quantity of water would change the substance of wine, and render the matter invalid. An eighth or even a fifth part of water would not change the substance of wine, although a third would cause it to become doubtful matter.

Rules concerning the consecration of bread and wine. — The following rules concern both the *validity* and the *liceity* of the consecration.

1. The matter for consecration should be before the celebrant, on the altar, and within view, or within reach of his hand. The bread and wine should moreover be either actually or virtually determined by the will of the celebrant. These two conditions are essential, in order to give full meaning to the pronoun « This » which the priest uses in pronouncing the form of consecration : « This is my body; this is my blood ». Both are necessary for *validity*.

Breads, therefore, that might be in the tabernacle cannot be regarded as consecrated, because they are not present in the required way. The same would be true of breads that might have slipped under the corporal; for either they are

1. See A. Tanquerey, *Syn. Theol. dogm., De Eucharistia,* n. 598, note 4.

not present, or the celebrant has no intention in their regard. As regards the drops of wine which sometimes cling to the inside of the cup of the chalice, the following may be said. If the priest never intended to consecrate them, they are probably not consecrated. Since, however, this point is doubtful, the priest should drink these drops with the precious blood, or with the ablutions.

2. Several other conditions are prescribed for the *liceity* of the consecration. The whole matter of consecration should be placed upon the altar, the corporal, and the altar stone. This precept binds *sub gravi*. Since the altar stone is generally set in the altar, and is of small dimensions, the matter to be consecrated should be always physically present on the corporal, and morally speaking on the altar stone.

3. The entire matter of the sacrifice should be present on the altar for the oblation, in the manner just described. The bread and wine must always be so present, because they are necessary for the oblation. The small hosts used for the communion of the faithful should likewise be there at that moment, because both the large host of the celebrant and the small hosts of the faithful are offered up in the same prayer : *Suscipe, sancte Pater*. If the priest had forgotten to place them on the corporal before the oblation, and they were needed, he could still receive them during the oblation, after the preface, or even after the beginning of the canon. In this case, the priest should mentally repeat the offering. As the celebrant approaches the moment of consecration, the reason for such an extraordinary procedure should be graver. No reason can authorize the consecration of small hosts after the consecration of the large one. Moreover, the priest is bound *sub levi* to uncover the ciborium, if it be present, both at the offertory and at the consecration. Failure to do this, however, would in no way affect the validity of the consecration [1].

1. The obligation requiring the celebrant to consecrate both the bread and

The symbolical meaning of the bread and wine. — Our divine Savior instituted the sacrament of the Eucharist, in order to come to us in person, and to impart to our soul, already raised to the supernatural life, a grace of supernatural nourishment, i. e. a grace which would sustain, increase, strengthen that supernatural life, and impart to our soul a holy delight. Since He wished to become our supernatural food, it was only natural, that He should choose bread and wine to signify both His presence and the grace He was to produce in us.

In studying the nature of these two elements, Tradition pointed out their wonderful fitness as symbols in the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist. By the Holy Eucharist, Christ comes into each one of us, to foster our supernatural life and the virtues of that life, and to impart to us many actual graces, so that, if we communicate with good dispositions, we shall be transformed and incorporated in Him. He wishes to effect this change not here and there, as if by exception, but in the hearts of all communicants. From these individual effects, there is born that great and universal union of all Christians in Jesus Christ, bound together by the vital and powerful link of the life of grace, which manifests itself in faith and hope and an unbounded charity for God and one's neighbour. Now what is more fitted to symbolize this than bread and wine? The grains of wheat ground and kneaded to form one bread; the grapes pressed to produce one and the same wine, these, according to St. Augustine, are symbolic of that union of all the faithful in Christ, which is the effect of communion[1].

The Eucharist is not only a sacrament; it is also a sacrifice. As we have already said, and will later prove[2], it is a sacri-

---

wine, and not one element alone, v. g. the bread, comes from the very nature of the Eucharistic sacrifice. We will discuss this obligation, when treating of the nature of the sacrifice of the Mass. See below, p. 459, note 1, p. 481, note 2.

1. Serm. CCLXXII; *P. L.*, XXXVIII, 1247. See above, p. 283.

2. See above, p. 170, and below, pp. 459-461.

fice for the sake of the sacrament. It is a sacrifice in which the faithful should immolate themselves with Christ, and thus appropriate to themselves the satisfactions and merits of the sacrifice of the cross. This too, according to the teaching of the Fathers in general, and of St. Cyprian in particular, is symbolized by the bread and wine. The wine that is offered at the offertory, must be diluted with a little water. The wine symbolizes the blood of Christ, the water, the faithful. The wine diluted with water symbolizes the union of the faithful in Christ, in view of the sacrifice which is soon to be offered on the altar. Again, the water poured with the flour, and constituting the dough which, after it is baked, becomes bread, symbolizes the same sacrificial union of the faithful in Christ[1].

This symbolism could not be so well expressed by any other signs than those of bread and wine. The latter, of themselves, are sufficient to sustain man's life, and feed his energies during the normal period of his existence. At all times and in all places they have been looked upon as the food *par excellence*. Consequently bread and wine are for man the most expressive symbol of his life, and in offering them, he seems to offer himself[2].

II

The Form of the Sacrament of the Eucharist.

The Decree to the Armenians. — According to St. Justin, the bread and wine are consecrated « by the prayer composed of the words of Christ »[3]. According to St. Irenaeus, the change is effected « by the invocation to God »,

1. Epist. LXIII, 13, See above, p. 276.
2. See A. Vigourel, *Le canon romain de la Messe*, p. 95.
3. *Apol.*, LXVI.

τὴν ἐπίκλησιν τοῦ θεοῦ [1], which he calls in another place, « the word of God »[2]. The bread becomes the body of Christ, « by the prayer », writes Origen[3]. In one of his sermons to the people, St. Athanasius explains how the bread and wine are changed into the body and blood of the Word, « when the great prayers and holy invocations have been pronounced »[4]. Thus, according to these testimonies, the consecration is wrought by the Eucharistic prayer, the invocation, the epiclesis. The latter word does not denote as yet any particular part of the Eucharistic prayer, nevertheless it is very evident that the consecratory value is attributed particularly to those words of the Savior, which the celebrant repeats in the name of Christ.

From the middle of the fourth century on, a certain efficacy seems to have been attributed to a prayer said after the account of the institution at the last supper, and which began to be more and more frequently spoken of as the epiclesis. According to the Anaphora of Serapion[5], and according to St. Athanasius[6], this prayer was addressed to God, that He might send His Word upon the offerings and transform them. According to St. Cyril of Jerusalem, God was asked to send the Holy Ghost[7].

From the end of the fourth century, the custom followed by the church of Jerusalem was adopted in all the Eastern churches. This change, which was entirely one of form, was due no doubt to the controversies of the period. The epiclesis, as we must henceforth call it, reached its full devel-

---

1. *Haer.*, l. IV, XVIII, 5.
2. *Ibid.*, l. V, II, 3.
3. *Contra Celsum*, l. VIII, 33, *P. G.*, XI, 1565.
4. *Sermo de paschate et de sacrosancta eucharistia*, 8; *P. G.*, LXXXVI, 2401.
5. See above, p. 259, note 2.
6. See above, p. 261.
7. See above, p. 263.

opment in the liturgies of St. Basil and of St. John Chrysostom[1].

We have shown above the peculiar fate of those words, τύπος, ἀντίτυπον, σύμβολον, which the Fathers used to designate the offerings after the consecration. According to Clement of Alexandria, the word, τύπος, designates the body and blood of Christ, under the appearances of bread and wine, as signifying the Incarnate Word. In the fourth century, the words τύπος, ἀντίτυπον, σύμβολον became synonymous, and were used to indicate the sensibles qualities of the bread and wine to which is connected the real presence of the body and blood of Christ. In other words, they designated the appearances or Eucharistic species of the body and blood of Christ, the Sacrament of the Eucharist. In the first half of the fifth century certain authors began to use them in the sense of a symbol of the body and blood of Christ, but completely devoid of the reality it signifies. For all that, these authors were not symbolists. They taught that before the consecration, only the « antitypes », i. e. the symbols of the body and blood of Christ, are present on the altar. After the consecration, the « antitypes » vanish, and the body and blood of Christ take their place. In the eighth century, this new term was predominant. Nothing however can prevent custom from stepping in and changing the meaning of words; it is like rust that changes the nature of iron. The result was disastrous, for having noted that in the liturgy of St. Basil, the offerings were still called « antitypes » even after the words of consecration, St. John Damascene, the most famous doctor of his age, concluded that it could no be these words that consecrate, but the epiclesis. To be more exact, he taught that the words of the institution are, as it were, the seed which is properly called the cause of the fruit; but just as the seed needs something else to develop into fruit, so the

1. See Brightman, *Eastern Liturgies*, pp. 386-387, 405-406.

epiclesis must be joined to the words of the institution, in order to produce the sacred fruit, which is the body of the Savior[1].

The explanation of St. John Damascene was received almost everywhere in the Greek Church, except at Constantinople where certain groups continued to adhere to the teaching of St. John Chrysostom, and at Antioch. It introduced an important dogmatic difference between the Greeks and their earlier traditions, and especially between the Greeks and the Latins. This whole matter could not but end in controversy; the latter, however, did not break out until the beginning of the fourteenth century, when some Latins, stopping in the Orient, began to reproach the Greeks for attributing the consecration to the epiclesis and not to the words of the institution. Nicolas Cabasilas, metropolitan of Thessalonica, appealed in his reply to the teaching of St. John Damascene, and at the council of Florence the Greeks were asked to explain themselves as regards the epiclesis. After quite a long discussion, Bessarion, archbishop of Nicaea, declared in the name of the Greeks, that they follow the doctrine of their illustrious Doctor, St. John Chrysostom, according to whom the « divine words of our Redeemer contain the full and entire force of transubstantiation ». The council was satisfied with this oral declaration; the doctrine of the exclusive consecratory value of the words of institution was purposely avoided in the *Decree of union,* 1448[2]. In the following year, however, Eugene IV, in the *Decree to the Armenians,* was led to pronounce on the matter and form of the sacrament of the Eucharist, and so to determine the words that have a consecratory value. « The form of the sacrament of the Eucharist, he stated, consists in the words, by which the Savior instituted the sacra-

1. *De fide orthodoxa,* l. IV, c. XIII; *P. G.,* XCIV, 1140-1141.

2. See HEFELE, *Histoire des conciles,* trad. Delarc-Leclercq, t. VII, 2nd part, pp. 1024-1025.

ment : the priest, speaking in the person of Christ, makes (conficit) the sacrament, for by the power of the words themselves, the substance of the bread and wine is changed into the body and blood of Christ [1]. In so far as it treats of the sacraments, the *Decree to the Armenians* is a practical instruction, which has full authority as such, but it is not a definition of faith. The Council of Trent restated the doctrine of Pope Eugene IV, declaring that « it has always been the faith of the Church, that the body and blood of Christ are under the appearances of bread and wine, immediately after and in virtue of the words of consecration [2] », that is to say the very words of the institution. Pope Benedict XIII, on July 8, 1729, and Pope Pius VII, on May 8, 1822, commanded the Melkite patriarch of Antioch to teach that transubstantiation takes place not by the joint consecratory value of the epiclesis, but by the adequate value of the words of our Lord [3]. However, these declarations or decrees are not the same as a definition of faith, and consequently, the doctrine of the consecratory force of the words of the Savior can only be regarded as *certain,* and *almost an article of faith* [4].

The words of consecration of the bread and wine. — According to the *Decree to the Armenians,* the form of the sacrament of the Eucharist consists in those words of the Savior by which He instituted the sacrament. According to all liturgies, these words should be preceded by the account of the institution. The complete form of the sacrament of the Eucharist as found in the Roman liturgy is as follows :

---

1. Denz., 698.

2. Denz., 876.

3. *Coll. Lacensis, Acta et Decreta concil. recentior.*, t. II, 1866; col. 439-440, 551.

4. In the eighteenth century, Père Le Brun, a priest of the Oratory, came near resurrecting the controversy regarding the epiclesis in a treatise entitled « *Défense de l'ancien sentiment sur la forme de la consécration de l'Eucharistie* »,

Qui pridie quam pateretur, accepit panem in sanctas ac venerabiles manus suas, et elevatis oculis in cælum ad te Deum Patrem suum omnipotentem, tibi gratias agens, benedixit, fregit, deditque discipulis suis, dicens : Accipite, et manducate ex hoc omnes. HOC EST ENIM CORPUS MEUM.

Simili modo postquam coenatum est, accipiens et hunc præclarum calicem in sanctas ac venerabiles manus suas : item tibi gratias agens, benedixit, deditque discipulis suis, dicens : Accipite, et bibite ex eo omnes. HIC EST ENIM CALIX SANGUINIS MEI, NOVI ET ÆTERNI TESTAMENTI : MYSTERIUM FIDEI : QUI PRO VOBIS ET PRO MULTIS EFFUNDETUR IN REMISSIONEM PECCATORUM.

It may be asked whether all these words are essential, that is whether, all are necessary for the validity of the form. Since transubstantiation like all substantial changes, is an instantaneous act, there must be some one precise moment in which the bread and wine are changed into the body and blood of Christ, and this moment must correspond to some certain word of the consecration. We should not conclude, however, that this word alone is essential in the formula of consecration. Though the act of conversion is instantaneous, that act cannot be expressed in human language except in a discursive manner, that is, by means of a simple or complex proposition. What, then, are the essential words in the formulas of consecration, or, what are those which the Church, the supreme judge in this matter, considers to be essential?

Paris, 1727, generally published at the end of the « *Explication des prières et des cérémonies de la Messe* » ; relying on the testimonies of the Greek Fathers, he taught that the formula of consecration is the epiclesis jointly with the words of the institution. The words of Our Lord, he said, are really the efficient cause of the consecration, but their efficacy is conditioned by the epiclesis which is an impetratory cause. Père Le Brun was hotly taken to task by contemporary theologians. See S. SALAVILLE, *Epiclèse eucharistique*, III. *L'Enseignement ecclésiastique en Occident, depuis le VIIIe siècle*, in *Dict. de Théol. cath.*, t. V, pp. 265-276. We shall later expose the way we conceive the epiclesis, as it exists both among the Latins and among the Greeks.

1. Scotus claimed that the words *Qui pridie quam pateretur, etc.*, and the others, *Simili modo postquam coenatum est, etc.*, which give the account of the last supper, are essential. This is so, he says, because it is essential that the priest manifest his intention of acting in the name of Christ, and this is done normally by repeating the account of the last supper [1].

This opinion is generally rejected by theologians. Indeed, for the validity of the consecration, the priest must have the actual or virtual intention of acting in the name of Christ. It is equally necessary that the formulas be pronounced not in a mere narrative but in an operative way, with the actual or virtual intention of effecting what they signify. This twofold intention need not be outwardly expressed, and, *a fortiori,* the intention to act in the name of Christ need not be expressed by the repetition of the account of the last supper. Nevertheless, the opinion of Scotus is not without foundation, and according to the rubrics of the Missal the priest is bound to repeat *Qui pridie quam pateretur, etc.*, or *Simili modo postquam coenatum est, etc.*, when the consecration of the bread or wine is to be repeated [2].

2. The formula for the consecration of the bread is as follows : *Hoc est enim corpus meum.* The conjunction *enim* is not essential to the form of the sacrament. Its omission would not be more than a venial sin. All the other words are essential, and consequently cannot be omitted. The use of any different words would undoubtedly affect the essence of the form. Thus, the demonstrative pronoun *hoc,* « this », cannot be changed into the word *hic* or *ecce*, « here », or « here is ». However, there would be no essential change if one were to say, *Hoc corpus est corpus meum*, providing the formula were understood in the sense given to it by Maldonatus : « This body which will be present

1. *In IV Sent.*, dist. VIII, q. II.
2. *Missale Romanum, De defectibus*, III-IV.

(when the whole formula is pronounced), is my body[1] ». There would be an essential change if one would say « *Hic panis est corpus meum* », for then it would be as though we said « This bread, while remaining bread, becomes the body of Christ », which of course is impossible. The following formula would likewise be doubtful : *Illud est corpus meum;* for the demonstrative pronoun *illud* does not point to the thing we wish to point to *hic et nunc.*

The verb *est* is both copulative and operative, and consequently could not be replaced by any other verb. Could it be understood, in the sense of not being expressly stated? St. Thomas does not believe so, for the very reason that the verb *est* links the statement together, and effects, at the same time, the substantial change[2]. The word *corpus* cannot be replaced by the word *caro*, « flesh », because though the latter sometimes signifies the whole man, literally, it refers only to a part. The possessive adjective *meum* is also necessary, and cannot be replaced by the word *Christi* for example; for, if the priest were to say : *Hoc est corpus Christi,* he would not seem to be acting in the person of the Lord[3].

3. The formula for the consecration of the wine is first of all : *Hic est enim calix sanguinis mei.* With the exception of the conjunction *enim*, all these words are essential and cannot be omitted. *Hic* is not an adverb, but a demonstrative adjective, signifying « this chalice ». The form would in no way be changed, were we to say with St. Matthew and St. Mark : *Hic est sanguis meus.* The demonstrative adjective would then signify, « this blood », and the complete meaning of the sentence would be : « This blood which will be present (when the whole formula is pronounced) is my blood. »

---

1. See above, p. 223, note 2.
2. See *Sum. theol.*, III, q. LXXVIII, a. 2.
3. See TANQUEREY, *Synopsis Theol. dogm., De Eucharistia,* n. 98.

The formula for the consecration of the wine ends with these words : *Novi et aeterni Testamenti : mysterium fidei : qui pro vobis et pro multis effundetur in remissionem peccatorum.* Excepting the two words or phrases *aeterni,* and *mysterium fidei*, which were adopted by the Church, and whose omission would leave the form intact, all the other words are taken from the account of the institution. St. Thomas teaches that these words belong to the « *substance of the form* »[1]. It is controverted among theologians whether St. Thomas wished to make them an essential or merely an integral part of the form, in as much as they express the sacrificial character of the Eucharist[2].

The former opinion, namely that these words are an essential part of the form, whether it be the mind of St. Thomas or not, has a strong degree of probability, and is to be followed in practice. Consequently, if these words were omitted, the form must be repeated conditionally, for the safer side must always be taken in questions respecting the validity of the sacraments[3].

---

1. *In IV Sent.*, dist. VIII, q. II, a. 2, sol. 1 : *Et ideo illa quæ sequuntur, sunt essentialia sanguini, prout in hoc sacramento consecratur : et ideo, oportet quod sint de substantia formæ.*

2. See Ch. Pesch, *Praelectiones dogmaticae, De Eucharistia*, n. 775.

3. While repeating the account of the institution, the priest has to perform a certain number of liturgical gestures. For instance, at the word *benedixit*, he blesses the host, making a sign of the cross over it, and the same thing is done as regards the chalice. What is the significance of this blessing accompanied by the sign of the cross?

The word « to bless » has two meanings. First of all, it signifies to wish well and in this sense it is a prayer over an object or a person, in order to purify, sanctify or consecrate them. The sign of the cross has a natural connection with this meaning, since it is from the cross that all sanctification flows. When, therefore this sign accompanies a wish or a prayer, it is itself a wish or a prayer. The second meaning of the word « to bless », is to praise or glorify a person or to render him thanks for his gifts. Even in this sense, it is often accompanied by a sign of the cross. It is then nothing more than a pious gesture suggested by the word « to bless », unless we wish to show that all glory or thanksgiving is rendered to God by Jesus Christ crucified. This is the

ARTICLE II

The effects of the Sacrament of the Eucharist.

General Doctrine on the effects of the Eucharist. — « Let us seek, as best we are able, writes St. Cyril of Alexandria, the meaning of the mystery of the Eucharist God had created all things immortal, but through the jealousy of the demon, sin entered the world. Tempted by the demon, the first man sinned and fell under the divine curse. How could this man, now the slave of death, regain his immortality? His mortal flesh had to draw upon the life-giving power of God, which is the *Logos*. The *Logos* became man, joined Himself to flesh, rendered it immune from corruption, and renewed its life. Yet it was further necessary for Him to enter into us in a divine way by the Holy Ghost, and to mingle, as it were, with our bodies His own sacred flesh and precious blood. This is what we possess in the life-giving eulogy, in the bread and wine (in the life-giving Eucharist under the appearances of bread and wine) » [1].

Thus, according to St. Cyril of Alexandria, our poor human nature, mortally wounded by sin, could be vivified only, by a union with the divinity in the person of Christ. This general quickening of mankind, however, was to receive its complement in the sanctification of each man in particular. Our mortal body must become united with the life-giving body of Christ, if we are ever to have life in Him.

To complete the description of the effects of the Eucharist in the soul of the communicant, we must add to the

---

meaning we should give to the word « to bless » said by the priest while repeating the account of the institution, and to the sign of the cross, made by him over the host and the chalice.

1. *Comment. in Lucam,* XXII; *P. G.*, LXXII, 908-912.

above resumé of St. John's Gospel, the teaching of St. Paul.

According to the great Apostle, the Son of God became man in order to communicate to them the fullness of the divinity. But because men had sinned, He was obliged to expiate their fault, and merit for them by His sufferings the grace He wished them to have, before He could give them the gifts of salvation. That is why from His very entrance into this world, He accepted a life of sacrifice, and continued in it, even to the bloody sacrifice of Calvary. The sacrifice of the cross was, then, the condition of our salvation. But how was this salvation, which had been merited or gained for us, to be applied to our souls? On the altar of the cross, Christ had offered Himself as the representative of the human race, but He had offered Himself alone. It was still necessary for all men to offer themselves individually, with Him, in order to share in the satisfactions and merits of the great sacrifice of Calvary. This is why Christ, on the eve of His death, instituted the Eucharistic sacrifice to commemorate and perpetuate the sacrifice of the cross.

It was to be a sacrifice, in which men might sacrifice themselves one by one with Him, become incorporated in Him, and thus receive the fullness of His divinity.

The synthesis of these two doctrines is as follows. The Word of God became man, in order to communicate to men the fullness of His divine life. This communication takes place in the reception of the Holy Eucharist. Since men had sinned, however, it was necessary, first of all, for the Word made flesh, to merit the grace He wished us to have, by the sacrifice of the cross. Furthermore, to receive the divine life in communion, it is necessary for every Christian first to sacrifice himself with Christ. Had there been no sin, this divine life would have been given without any expiatory sacrifice, but since there was sin, it is only by the sacrifice of the cross that the divine life is merited; and it is only by the Eucharistic sacrifice in which the faithful participate chiefly by communion, that this divine life is given.

This synthesis clearly shows the unity and multiplicity of the effects of communion. First of all, communion is the *means of participating in the sacrifice of Christ;* it *incorporates us into our Savior;* it is *the food of our supernatural life;* it *produces wonderful effects on the body of the communicant,* and it *fosters true Catholic life.*

Communion makes us participate in the sacrifice of Christ. — This is the teaching of St. Paul to the Corinthians, a teaching we made use of in proving the institution of the Eucharist, and the dogma of the real presence.

When, at Corinth, sacrifices were offered to the idols, part of the victim's flesh was afterwards eaten at a religious banquet by the devotees of the deity, and the rest was sold at the market, each one buying as he pleased. St. Paul, writing to the Corinthians, saw no objection in the Christians buying at the market the meats offered to idols, and using them as ordinary meats. He did however expressly forbid the practice of participating in the religious banquets of the pagans, because here, he said, the guests who eat the flesh of the victims really participate in the sacrifice offered to the idols. Such banquets, therefore, establish a moral bond between the worshippers and the deity, uniting both into one moral whole.

It is clear that Christians cannot allow themselves to be drawn into such a union, they who, at the Christian meetings, receive the body and blood of Christ, and thus participate in the sacrifice of Christ, and become one moral body with Him. One or the other must be chosen. A man cannot be both a pagan and a Christian[1].

Thus, according to the doctrine of St. Paul, the Christian who communicates, participates in the sacrifice of Christ, and is sacrificed with Christ. The ritualistic way of sharing

---

1. See, I *Cor.*, x, 14-21.

in a sacrifice is to immolate oneself together with the victim. This was so even in the Old Testament, as St. Paul proceeds to show. The Jews did not merely have a spiritual share in the sacrifices offered for them; they ate the very flesh of the victims. This was a sign of their participation in the sacrifice, and of the sacrifice they made of themselves together with the victim immolated[1].

Under the Old Law, to participate in a sacrifice or to sacrifice oneself with a victim meant not only to eat the flesh of the immolated victim, but to unite one's heart to the sacrifice, in other words to become inwardly sacrificed.

Thus, participation in a sacrifice or self-immolation in union with the victim established a bond of union between God and the worshipper. Consequently communion, in which we share in the sacrifice of Christ, and sacrifice ourselves with Him, requires a personal, spiritual and interior sacrifice on the part of each one of us, so that an intimate spiritual bond may exist between Christ and us, and He and we may be but one.

In what, however, does this spiritual or interior sacrifice consist? Every sacrifice consists essentially in the immolation of a gift or offering, and the immolation is the sign and measure of the value of the gift. Hence a spiritual and interior sacrifice consists in offering to God the very best that is within us, by immolation or mortification of all our evil inclinations. It consists in offering to God our humility, by renouncing all forms of pride; our poverty by detaching ourselves from the goods of this world; our innocence by fleeing from all forms of sensuality. It consists in placing our trust in Him and in those whom He has set over us, by repressing those tendencies to disobey and criticise which spring from our fallen nature. Finally it consists in the offering of our love of God and the love

1. See *ibid.*, x, 18; — *Hebr.*, xiii, 10. — *Levit.*, vi, 29-30.

of our neighbor through the complete immolation of self. This is that spiritual and interior sacrifice which communion imposes upon us, while it helps us to share in the sacrifice of Christ. There is certainly no more excellent way of « announcing the death of the Lord », or of « recalling to our minds the memory of His Passion ». It was indeed with a mind aglow with the mystery of the blessed Eucharist, that the author of the Imitation wrote the following words : « For there is no oblation more worthy, no satisfaction greater for the washing away of sins, than to offer thyself purely and entirely to God, together with the oblation of the body of Christ, in the mass, and in communion [1]. »

Through Communion we are incorporated in our Savior. — According to the teaching of St. Paul, the faithful who participate in the sacrifice of Christ by communion, are so closely united to Him, that they are but one with Him [2].

First of all there is the material bond, which is effected by the mere receiving of the body of Christ, and which lasts as long as the accidents of the bread and wine are not substantially changed. This union is one of mere contact, analogous, in the opinion of Cardinal Lugo [3], to that which exists between the sacred species contained in a ciborium, and the ciborium itself. This union takes place both in the worthy and the unworthy communicant.

When, however, the Christian communicates in a worthy manner, a spiritual union of the greatest intimacy is immediately established between Christ and himself. As the dispositions of the communicant become more and more worthy, so too this union becomes more and more intense and intimate, until the very words of Our Savior in St.

---

1. *De Imitatione,* l. IV, c. VII, 4.
2. See I *Cor.*, X, 17.
3. *De Eucharistia,* disp. XII, sect. 5, n. 109.

John's Gospel are fulfilled : « He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, abideth in me and I in him. As the living Father hath sent me and I live by the Father, so he that eateth me, the same also shall live by me [1]. » Our Savior, present in the communicant, gives an increase of habitual grace and the supernatural virtues, together with abundant actual graces, so that the communicant becomes truly transformed, all his thoughts, sentiments, desires and actions being rendered conformable to the thoughts and sentiments of Jesus Christ. He is truly incorporated into Christ : it is no longer he who lives, but Christ who lives in Him. The purpose of all these graces is to enkindle in the communicant, the most ardent love for God and his neighbour, so that a sweet and strong bond of friendship may be established between them. In this love, according to St. Thomas, consists the sacramental grace of the Eucharist [2].

While uniting the individual Christian to his Savior, communion likewise joins all Christians in Jesus Christ, by causing them all to share in the one same flesh of Christ, and to draw therefrom one and the same divine life. The result is one body of which all Christians are the members, and Christ the head. This is the teaching proposed especially by St. Cyprian [3], St. Augustine [4], and St. Cyril of Jerusalem [5]. As the scattered grains of wheat are united in one single bread, so the faithful are joined together in the unity of the body of Christ. They become « one body », and « one blood » with Christ. In a word, they become what they receive, the body of Christ, and as such, are animated by His Holy Spirit.

---

1. John, VI, 56-57.
2. *Sum. theol.*, III, q. LXXIX, a. 1, ad 2[um].
3. Epist. LXIII, 13.
4. Serm. CCLXXII; *P. L.*, XXXVIII, 1247.
5. Catech. XXII (mystag. IV); *P. G.*, XXXIII, 1097-1104.

The Eucharist, the food of our supernatural life. — We have already stated that one of the effects of communion is the nourishment of our supernatural life so that we become incorporated in Christ. That which nature and material nourishment effect in our natural life, writes St. Thomas, the sacrament of the Eucharist effects in our supernatural life. Consequently, it sustains and increases it, repairs its wasted energies, and delights our soul [1]. This doctrine has been approved and restated word for word by the Council of Florence [2].

Man cannot be satisfied with living a purely natural life. He has to live a divine life, the life of grace. This life consists in this that God comes to us and transforms us so that we may be fitted to the exigencies of His presence. This, however, is but the physical aspect of grace. If God enters our souls, and makes us like unto Him, it is in order to establish between Him and us a bond of friendship and union that should grow more intimate day by day. This is the life of grace. We are born into it when we receive baptism. Penance restores it to us when we have lost it through sin. Now, the first effect of communion is to sustain that supernatural life, by keeping it directed towards God, and by strengthening it for its ceaseless struggle against the world, the flesh and the devil.

Here on earth, life in the supernatural order, as life in the natural order, means not only struggle, but growth, a growth that is accomplished by struggle. It is this very supernatural life that communion develops in us. To understand this development, we must remember that the life of grace is conceived in much the same way as natural life, i. e. there exists a vital principle working through the intermediary of different faculties, which could not act, if they be not set in motion. The vital principle of grace,

1. *Sum. theol.*, III, q. LXXIX, a, 1.
2. DENZ., 698.

and its intermediary faculties or supernatural virtues, through which it energizes, constitute sanctifying or habitual grace, and the supernatural virtues are energizing into act by an actual grace. Now the development of the supernatural life resulting from communion consists in an increase of sanctifying grace, i. e. of the vital principle of grace, and of the supernatural virtues. Moreover, the Eucharist gives the communicant the right to receive numerous actual graces, which move to action the supernatural virtues within it, and multiply supernatural acts, thereby elevating it to spiritual fervor, or keeping it in that blessed state.

The development of the life of grace in a soul goes hand in hand with the disappearance of sin. The more this life is developed, the more sin disappears. Consequently the increase of grace in the communicant's soul goes together with the disappearance of sin. In other words, another effect of communion is the remission of sins. This is the teaching of the Council of Florence which borrows the very words of St. Thomas, to state that the Eucharist repairs our supernatural forces.

What sins, however, are remitted? Generally speaking, the Eucharist does not remit mortal sin. Only the sacraments which give or restore the life of grace, can do that. The Eucharist presupposes the life of grace, it does not give it. The grace it confers only fortifies this life. If, however, a repentant sinner, thinking he had the proper kind of contrition, but who in reality had only attrition, should approach the holy table, his mortal sin would be forgiven indirectly or accidentally, in the language of theologians[1]. Although the Eucharist does not regularly remit mortal sins, it does immediately remit those venial sins for which the communicant has at least a vir-

1. See A. Tanquerey, *Syn. Theol. dogm.*, *De Sacramentis in genere*, n. 54.

tual repentance. It remits others by communicating actual graces which move us to acts of charity[1]. For, indeed, it is characteristic of nourishment to repair the daily losses of energy, or, in the words of St. Thomas, the losses of our vital heat[2]; and in the spiritual order, these losses are caused by venial sins. The Eucharist also heals the Christian life of all its weaknesses and weariness, for, in imparting strength and vigor to the life of grace, it removes venial sin, not only in itself, but also in its results and in its cause; namely, this debility and heaviness which hinder the soul's flight to God. The remedy is a radical one, since sin is blotted out by the advent of grace. Even, it is preventive as well as radical, for communion worthily received gives us a right to many actual graces which help us to surmount the difficulties of life. That is why communion has always been considered the most efficacious means of persevering in the Christian life. Some theologians — Suarez, in particular — would even go so far as to doubt the perseverance of those who willingly and for a long time abstain from approaching the holy table[3].

If the Eucharist thus sustains and develops the life of grace within us and frees us of all our weaknesses, there must result a certain supernatural happiness for our souls. For happiness arises from strong and well-ordered activity. This is why communion is said to bring joy to a soul in the state of grace. On certain days, for instance, the day of our first communion, or the day of one's conversion, this joy is generally both spiritual and sensible; at other times, it will be purely spiritual, and bound up with the satisfaction that comes with the consciousness of duty well done.

Thus it is that communion worthily received produces

---

1. See Suarez, *De virt. paenit.*, disp. XII, sect. 1.
2. *Sum. theol.*, III, q. LXXXIX, a. 4.
3. *De Eucharistia*, disp. XL, sect. 2, concl. 4.

in us the grace of supernatural nourishment, a grace which sustains and increases our supernatural life, repairs our wasted energies, and fills us with a holy joy. Like all the other sacraments, it produces these effects *ex opere operato*, namely by the very fact of its reception. *Ex opere operato,* it sustains and increases our supernatural life. *Ex opere operato*, it remits those venial sins for wich we have, at least, virtual repentance; it remits other sins *ex opere operantis,* in this sense, that it bestows the grace to perform supernatural acts which in turn merit pardon. Unlike the Eucharistic sacrifice, Eucharistic communion has no direct immediate effect of satisfaction, and therefore it does not remit *ex opere operato,* the temporal punishment due to sin. It does however produce an indirect effect in that regard, *ex opere operantis,* by moving the soul to perform supernatural acts which are means of satisfaction. Though the Sacrament of the Eucharist produces its effects, *ex opere operato,* we must remember that the extent of these effects is proportionate to the good dispositions of the communicant. Indeed, the efficacy, *ex opere operato,* of the Eucharist, is the same as that of all the other sacraments. That is why certain communions effect a true transformation into Jesus Christ, while others seem to be of little avail.

The effects of the Holy Eucharist on the body of the communicant. — « He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood », says the Savior in St. John, « hath everlasting life, and I will raise him up in the last day[1]. » Many of the Fathers, as we have noted, understood these words in their strict sense. Not only did these Fathers teach that our supernatural life and glorious resurrection depends on our participation in the Eucharist, but going one step further, they declared that in view of our glorious resurrec-

1. John, vi, 55.

tion, the Eucharist sows within our flesh an antidote of life, destined to preserve it from corruption, a leaven or a germ of immortality[1]. Undoubtedly the interpretation of these Fathers is exaggerated. The Savior merely asserted that to share in His glorious resurrection, our mortal body must come into contact with His own life-giving flesh, in other words, we must communicate in order to have life in Him; without this union, our soul has no share in grace, and our body will not arise glorious and immortal on the last day. What our Savior is teaching is this : holy communion bestows upon our mortal body, the pledge or title or right to a glorious resurrection.

It is likewise an exaggeration to say that holy communion produces no effect whatsoever on our body. The soul and body are so closely united, that it is impossible for holy communion to transform our soul, without, at the same time, exerting a blessed influence upon our body. The graces given to the worthy communicant certainly aid him in mastering the passions of sensuality, which proceed chiefly from the body. The Eucharist also affects our body directly by exstinguishing the fire of its lusts, restraining its wicked instincts, and giving us, even here below, a body less material, almost spiritualized, a body more akin, so to speak, to the substance of angels[2].

---

1. See Iren. *Haer.*, l. IV, xviii, 5. — Greg. Nyss., *Orat. catech.* xxxvii.

2. Faith teaches that the Eucharist is endowed with wonderful supernatural efficacy; but is it really a fact substantiated by experience? It is, and a close observer will surely agree with us. Consider that long line of virgins, religious of both sexes and priests, who from the very beginning of Christianity, have been the supreme examples of the great virtues of chastity, resignation, love of God and one's neighbor, although living in the flesh and in the midst of a fallen world. Now where have all these souls drawn the inspiration of such lofty virtue? The answer is everywhere the same. In Jesus Christ known, loved, served, and received in the Eucharist, did they find the strength to sanctify themselves. To those who would object by pointing to their own personal experience, we may reply as follows. First, in a matter of this kind, no one is a judge in his own case; and secondly, we must not forget that al-

The Eucharist fosters true Catholic life. — Just as communion unites the individual Christian to his Savior, so also it joins all Christians together in Jesus Christ. For it causes them to participate in the same flesh of Christ, and to draw therefrom the same divine life. The result is one great body, of which the faithful are the members, and Christ, the head.

The Eucharist, however, is more than the unifying principle of this huge social body. It is the principle which directs all its vital functions. It is the *raison d'être* of its hierarchy; the sacrament or means of supernatural life towards which all the other sacraments converge; the very source of Christian piety, the devotion *par excellence*, to which all other Catholic devotions are directed. In a word, it is the very center of Catholic worship.

The power of ordination has for its object sanctification : *conficere res sacras*. Since all things that are holy center around the Eucharist, we can truly say that the power of ordination is a power over the real body of Christ, or over the Eucharist. The power of jurisdiction, on the contrary, has to do with the guidance of the faithful : *subditos dirigere*.

---

though the sacrament of the Eucharist produces its effects *ex opere operato*, it does so dependently of our own dispositions. The best reply however seems to be that we cannot directly perceive the grace that is within us. We must not confuse grace with those sensible feelings which are its secondary and exceptional effects. « Those who are ever yearning for sensible satisfactions », writes St. John of the Cross, » seek the latter to such an extent in their communions, that they forget to praise and adore, in all humility, the Lord who has come unto them. So warped is their judgment, that when they are deprived of these sensible delights, they believe they have accomplished nothing. This is to betray a very crude conception of God, for the delight of the senses in the Most Blessed Sacrament is the least of those blessings, of which the chief is the invisible grace bestowed upon us. God refuses, at times, all such favors, in order that our souls may rest in Him in all the simplicity of faith. It is the desire of these souls to taste and enjoy God in all their spiritual exercises, as though God were comprehensible and accessible to the senses. Such an attitude is contrary to the very nature of God, who is grasped by faith alone ». See *The dark night of the soul*, ch. VI.

And since the faithful constitute the mystic body of Christ, the power of jurisdiction is rightly defined the power over the mystical body of Christ. According to St. Thomas, this power exists only because of the power of orders, and in principle presupposes it[1]. Hence, in his opinion, the power of orders contains the power of jurisdiction, *inchoative*. The absence of the former would necessarily mean the absence of the latter. Consequently, the Eucharist, the *raison d'être* of the power of orders, is also the *raison d'être* of the power of jurisdiction, and of the whole Catholic hierarchy, which is made up of these two powers with their several ramifications.

The two great external means of salvation instituted by Christ are the Church, considered in its hierarchy, and the sacraments. The Eucharist is as the end to which all the others sacraments tend, a center around which they revolve. This doctrine has been admirably developed by St. Thomas. The Eucharist, he writes, is the first in dignity; because it contains Christ in person, whilst in the other sacraments grace is conferred by an instrumental virtue derived from Christ. It is clear that in the sacrament of orders, the main effect is to confer the power of consecrating the holy Eucharist. The spiritual life begins in baptism, and is completed in the Eucharist; consequently, baptism is related to the Eucharist as a means to an end. It is the same with confirmation, which gives the strength not to refrain from the Eucharist out of weakness of faith or of human respect. As regards penance and extreme unction, they, too, prepare the soul for the worthy reception of the body of Our Lord. Even matrimony has its relationship to the Eucharist, at least in its signification. The Church, considered as the society of the faithful, and the Savior are indissolubly united by a fruitful and mysterious bond. This alliance was begun on

---

1. See *Sum. Theol. Suppl'em*, q. XI, a. 4, 5.

the day of the Incarnation, was consummated by Christ on the cross of Calvary, but the fulfillment was not to be complete, on the part of the faithful, until they, too, shared in the one and the same Eucharistic bread. Now, Christian marriage, in its secondary yet deep symbolism, signifies the mystic union of Christ with His Church, a union which for each individual Christian is consummated and perfected by the Eucharist. To be the real sign of this union, matrimony should be endowed with the very characteristics of Christ's union with His Church, namely, it should be a bond cemented and strengthened by the mutual sacrifice of the two contracting parties[1].

If from these two great external means of salvation, or of supernatural life, instituted by Christ, we pass to the different forms that this supernatural life can take in the Christian soul, we find that here also the Eucharist is a living and lifegiving source.

Piety or devotion presupposes the supernatural life, and consists in a readiness to do the things of God, and, in the practice of the evangelical counsels to a greater or less degree. Now, evidently the true source of Catholic devotion is the Eucharist. When the soul is in the state of grace, the Trinity is present indeed within us, and animates us with divine life[2]. Nevertheless few persons, no matter how far advanced on the road of sanctity, can, at least habitually, realize that presence of God in their soul in a manner sufficiently striking to make it their practical guide in all the difficulties of life. We, men, exhibit zeal and ardor only when we love, and to love, we must have the object of our affection real and concrete and, as it were, within our grasp. God well knows this craving of our heart, since it is He Himself who made it thus. That is why, before His return to the Father, Christ instituted the sacra-

1. *Sum. theol.*, III, q. LXV, a. 3.
2. See I *Cor.*, III, 16. — *John*, XIV, 23.

ment of the Eucharist, in order to continue His sensible presence among men. The Blessed Sacrament, then, is Our Lord dwelling in the midst of us, as He once dwelt in the midst of His Apostles, to be our fellow-companion on life's hard road, our energy, our light, the confidant of all our sorrows, the friend that never fails us.

The holy Eucharist is not merely God within our grasp; it is God giving us an example of the virtues we must practice. Every day, through the priest's ministrations, Our Lord renews His sacrifice. In this way He teaches us that, if we wish to share in the satisfactions and merits of the cross, we too must sacrifice ourselves. In order to offer and immolate Himself, the Savior renders Himself present under the appearances of bread and wine, namely under those species we are most accustomed to see and to touch, thereby inviting us to the practice of condescension towards our neighbor. Now, condescension presupposes abasement and humility : a very practical lesson given to us in the Eucharist. For in certain respects, the humiliation of Our Savior on the altar is greater than that on the cross; for, on the cross, as St. Thomas has written in his beautiful hymn *Adoro te,* only His divinity was hidden; whereas in the Eucharist His humanity is veiled as well [1].

Sacrifice, condescension and humility constitute but one side of the life of Our Savior in the Eucharist; if He reduces Himself to this state, it is for the love of God and men. Therefore the Christian should sacrifice himself likewise, because he loves God, and loves his neighbor in God. He should become all things to all men, and do good to all men because he loves them; for if Christ humbled Himself, it was for love of us. There is none of the Stoic pride and stiffness in Christianity. Here, love rules supreme. In placing God, therefore, within our reach, and in giving us Jesus Christ

---

1. See J. J. Olier, *Pietas Seminarii,* vii.

as the concrete and daily example of those great Christian virtues that we must all endeavor to cultivate, the Eucharist is truly the great fountain-head of Catholic piety and devotion.

We must not confuse devotion with devotions. As we have just seen, devotion is generosity in the service of God, whilst devotions are religious practices by which interior piety usually expresses itself, and by the aid of which we seek to develop supernatural virtues in the soul, or merely to obtain certain temporal advantages. Devotions can be arranged in either a dogmatic or liturgical order. The former arrangement is entirely centered around the holy Eucharist as Father Olier so deeply expressed it in his *Pietas Seminarii*. In this little book we find placed in the foreground, the devotion to the Blessed Sacrament, wherein the Incarnate Word continues His work as Mediator. Then follow, according to their more or less intimitate relation with the devotion to the Blessed Sacrament, the devotion to the blessed Virgin and St. Joseph; the devotion to the holy Apostles, especially to St. John; the devotion to the holy Gospel, which contains under the veil of words Jesus Christ Himself, just as the Eucharistic species contain the body and blood of Our Lord; and finally the devotion to the Church.

This arrangement is moreover entirely in accord with the liturgical economy. The only difference is this : that what is the starting point of the dogmatic arrangement is the goal of the liturgical order. The former brings us, first of all, in contact with the body of Christ in order that we may participate in the life and light of the Word of God. The liturgical arrangement first renews our faith in the Incarnate Word, and then leads us to share in His body and blood. The Word of God was made flesh to ransom us from the slavery of sin by the sacrifice of Calvary, and to communicate to us the fruits of this redemption by communion. This is the leading idea that rules the cycle of the liturgical year, whose three great feasts are Christmas,

Easter and Corpus Christi. Thus the two devotions to the Incarnate Word and to Christ the Redeemer converge to and meet in the devotion to the Blessed Sacrament.

It is especially by the celebration of the mystery of the Eucharist that the Church solemnizes all her great devotions. There is no prayer, no ceremony, no rite that does not cluster round the sacrifice of our altars. Being the goal of the liturgical year, the Eucharist is the soul which animates the entire Catholic liturgy. It is the *alpha* and *omega*. Our Catholic churches themselves have been planned and built solely with reference to the Eucharistic sacrifice. The portal of our Gothic churches, and especially of our cathedrals has been designed in the form of a monstrance, as if to tell the people of the sacred host within. In the interior, all the architectural details converge towards the altar as towards their common center, thus symbolizing the sentiments of the christian soul, which should be wholly turned to the Eucharist. So true is this, that in those countries where faith in the real presence has disappeared, churches built for the celebration of the Holy Euchrist now seem to have lost the reason of their existence, and are suited to no purpose whatsoever, neither religious, nor profane.

In this way is the Eucharist the motive force in all Catholic life. Taine, the historian and philosopher, was right when he said, " that the Eucharist is the center of the Roman Church[1] ".

It is the conclusion reached by every clear-sighted observer. Only the prejudiced and the narrow-minded will dare say that " the doctrine of the real presence is useless[2] ".

And indeed, has not the author of that statement, A. Réville, remarked that the denial by Protestants of the divinity of Christ, and of the existence of a personal God, can be traced to their denial of the doctrine of the real presence?

---

1. Quoted in *Lettres à un Étudiant*, 9th. letter, p. 213.
2. A. Réville, *Manuel d'Instruction religieuse*, p. 251.

Conclusion. — From the foregoing teaching, we see that communion can be first of all considered as a participation in the sacrifice of Our Savior in which we are invited to unite our sacrifice with that of Christ. Next, it may be regarded as a union and a veritable incorporation into Christ. These two aspects can be blended into one; for he who sacrifices himself with the Savior is incorporated into Him, and he who is thus incorporated truly sacrifices himself with Christ. None the less, these two aspects can be easily separated, and inspire us with two ways of receiving holy communion; both becoming more fruitful on account of our passing from the one to the other. He who desires to receive holy communion so as to become victim with Christ will first adore, under the Eucharistic species, Jesus Christ Our Savior, and the victim for our sins. Then he will offer Him the best that is in him, his intellect that He may illuminate it with the rays of a vivid faith, his will that He may sustain it in its endeavors; and his heart that he may preserve, encourage and console it. Since this gift is possible only through self-sacrifice, the communicant should with all his will-power renounce all forms of sin, sensuality, pride and vanity; and since he knows that such an act is impossible without grace, he will ask Our Lord to assist him with His grace and accomplish Himself this immolation.

ARTICLE III.

The recipient of the Sacrament of the Eucharist.

Questions to be solved. — *Is the reception of the sacrament of the Eucharist necessary* for salvation? *Is it necessary for young children to communicate? What dispositions are required for the reception of communion,* and, more particularly, *what state of soul should characterise the frequent communicant?* These are the questions to be discussed concerning the recipient of the Eucharist.

§ I.

The necessity of Communion.

Necessity of means for salvation, or merely necessity of precept. — That act is necessary by necessity of means for salvation, whose omission, even though not culpable, would prevent one from obtaining salvation : *est ille actus sine quo, etiam inculpabiliter omisso, salus obtineri nequit.* Such, for example, on the part of an adult, would be an absence of faith in God as Creator and Rewarder. An act necessary by necessity of precept, is one whose omission is an obstacle to salvation only when it is gravely culpable : *est ille actus sine quo, sed culpabiliter omisso, salus obtineri nequit.* Such, for an adult, would be faith in the articles of the Creed.

The words of the Savior, as recounted in St. John, are very clear : « Amen, Amen, I say unto you : Except you eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, you shall not have life in you [1] ». The Fathers, whose words we have cited before, place even stronger emphasis upon these words of the Savior [2]. They make participation in the Eucharist the indispensable condition of the supernatural life within us, and of the glorious resurrection of our body. Nevertheless, the Fathers never intended to exclude from salvation those who were not able to receive communion after baptism. Some are saved, they teach, who have only received the baptism of blood, or even only the baptism of desire [3]. Besides, the Council of Trent has anathematized

---

1. John, vi, 53.
2. See above, pp. 249-252; pp. 266-268.
3. See Cyr. Hier., catech. III, iv. — Amer., *De obitu Valent.*, 51; *P. L.*, XVI, 1374.

those who would say that infants, who have not yet attained the age of reason, are nevertheless bound by the obligation of communion [1].

In order to settle this apparent contradiction, St. Fulgentius already pointed out that salvation indeed requires that we be incorporated into Christ, but that a baptized person, who would die before receiving the Eucharist, is saved because he has already shared in the body and blood of Christ, when he became a member of Christ's body in baptism [2].

St. Thomas added some precision to this doctrine. The peculiar fruit of the Eucharist, he says, which is incorporation into Christ, is evidently necessary for salvation. However this fruit can become ours either by the real reception of the sacrament, or by the desire of it, just as in the case of the sacrament of baptism, in fact more easily, for the very reception of baptism implies already a tending towards the Eucharist [3].

Whence it follows that the reception of the Eucharist is not necessary by necessity of means. As regards infants, who have not yet attained the age of reason, this teaching is an *article of faith,* since, as we have said, it has been defined by the Council of Trent. As regards others, the doctrine is only *certain.*

Although communion is not necessary by necessity of means, it is necessary, both by divine and ecclesiastical precepts, for all the faithful who have reached the age of reason, i. e. about the seventh year.

The divine precept of communion. — The precept is contained in the words of Our Savior in St. John, already quoted : " Amen, amen, I say unto you : Except you eat the

---

1. Denz., 933.
2. See Epist. XII, 24-26, *P. L.*, LXV, 390-392.
3. *Sum. theol.*, III, q. LXXIII, a. 3.

flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, you shall not have life in you "; and from the teaching of the Council of Trent, that " Christ commanded His followers to honor His memory by communion[1] ".

Although the precept itself is clearly defined, it is not so evident just how far this obligation binds.

The general teaching is that the divine precept binds, independently of any other, those faithful who are in a proximate or probable danger of death. It obliges also the faithful from time to time during life. It would also bind, though not *in se*, but by reason of another precept, v. g. that which forbids one to enter heedlessly into temptation, those for whom communion would be the sole means of resisting a grave temptation.

The second and third cases are hard to determine. One thing however is certain, namely, that we must receive communion from time to time during life, although the Savior has not set any fixed times for these communions. This He has left for His Church to determine, and it is this which forms the subject matter of the ecclesiastical legislation concerning communion. It is to the first case alone, therefore, that we shall give our attention.

First, those faithful who are in a probable danger of death are bound by divine precept to receive communion. Those are in a proximate danger of death, who are afflicted with a serious sickness that has begun to take on an alarming character. In this case, the precept of communion binds *sub gravi*. A probable danger of death would be the condition of those who are on the point of undergoing a serious operation, of undertaking a perilous voyage, or of taking part in a deadly strife, in a word of seriously risking their lives. Here the force of the obligation depends on whether the probability of death is greater or less.

---

1. DENZ., 875.

To those who are in danger of death, the Viaticum is given. This consists in receiving communion without fasting, and according to a special form prescribed by the Ritual. The obligation in the case of those in proximate danger of death, is fulfilled when the Viaticum is received once during the same illness. If, however, the gravity of the illness continues, the Viaticum may be given every eight days, according to St. Liguori [1], every day, according to some modern theologians [2], or, at least, as often as communion may be given to the sick who are not obliged to fast and of whom we shall have occasion to speak later.

If one who had already received communion were suddenly taken sick, and in danger of death, either on that selfsame day or even several days after, he would probably not be bound to receive the Viaticum. He could do so however, not of course if the accident occurred on the same day on which he had already received communion, but if it happened on the morrow, or a fortiori two or three days afterwards.

The Viaticum must be given to all the faithful who are in danger of death, and who ask or consent to receive it, after they have been suitably prepared. The Church even desires that it be given to public sinners, unless they are impenitent, or show no signs of sorrow, or refuse to repair, as far as they are able, the wrong or the scandal of which they have been guilty. The Holy Eucharist should not be carried into a house of ill-repute. If the penitent shows such excellent dispositions that she is willing, even at the risk of losing the little life left to her, to be borne into a neighboring house or hospital, in order to receive communion, her request should be satisfied. The Viaticum should not be given to those whose stomachs cannot retain the slightest nourishment, nor to those who are actually delirious.

---

1. *Theol. moral.*, l. VI, *De Eucharistia*, n. 285.
2. Génicot, *Theol. moral. Inst.*, t. II, 212.

As we shall see later on, the age at which children may receive first communion is the same as for confession. Children should be prepared for this great act, as has already been said, as soon as they have reached the age of reason, that is about the seventh year. If it should happen that a child is in danger of death, before having made its first communion, it should receive the Viaticum, after having gone to confession and after having been sufficiently instructed. The only knowledge required of them, is the ability to know the difference between the heavenly food they are about to receive, and the ordinary material nourishment of everyday life[1].

We must here add that it is wholly in accord with the mind of the Church to give communion to those who are condemned to death, though the contrary custom prevailed for a long time in certain places. Nothing prevents them from receiving the holy Viaticum, on the very day of the execution, at least an hour beforehand, provided, of course, they have given signs of repentance, and have confessed their sins to a priest.

The privilege of carrying the Viaticum in public or in private is reserved to the pastor of the place, or to his curates[2]. Except in proximate seriously danger of death, no priest can administer the holy Viaticum without the authorization of the pastor[3]. When the danger of death is probable, and the pastor is absent, permission can be very easily presumed[4].

---

1. *Cod., J. C.*, can. 854.

2. Communion administered to the sick at their homes, — a case which we shall consider later, — is reserved to the pastor of the place, just as in the case of the Viaticum. However, it can be privately carried by any priest, who has obtained the explicit or even presumed permission of the priest who has charge of the Blessed Sacrament. See *Cod. J. C.*, can. 849.

3. According to the old Canon Law, a religious, who would run counter to these regulations, would have incurred excommunication *latæ sententiæ*, reserved *simpliciter* to the Holy See.

4. It was the custom of the early Christians to communicate under the

The ecclesiastical precept of communion. — Catholics are bound by divine precept to receive communion in proximate or probable danger of death, and from time to time during their life. As we have already remarked, the latter part of this statement is far from being definite. We must communicate from time to time during life, and yet Our Lord has placed no limit of time between one communion and another. Here is where the Church has intervened, in order that all abuses might be avoided.

According to the fourth Lateran Council (1215), « each one of the faithful, of both sexes, having reached the age of reason, should faithfully confess his sins to his own priest at least once a year, and perform the penance imposed; he must also reverently receive the Sacrament of the Eucharist, at least at Easter, unless on the advice of his confessor, or for some other reasonable motive, he believes he can abstain for a time. Otherwise, during life, he should not be allowed to enter the church, and upon his death, he should be deprived of ecclesiastical burial[1]. »

As can be readily seen from the wording of this decree, the precept of confession goes hand in hand with that of communion. Treating of the obligation of communion in a particular decree, the Council of Trent « anathematizes all those who deny that all the faithful of both sexes, who have reached the age of reason, are bound, every year, at least

---

species of bread and wine. This custom gave rise to many difficulties, especially as regards the carrying of communion to the sick at home. Hence the custom adopted at a very early date of giving communion to the latter, only under the form of bread. In the West, this custom gradually gained sway. In the East only was the old usage still maintained. See H. Moureau, *Communion sous les deux espèces*, in *Dict. de Théol. cath.*, art. *Communion eucharistique*, t. III, pp. 552-574. In the sixteenth century, certain Lutheran sects maintained that communion under both species was necessary for salvation by divine precept. The Council of Trent condemned them in a definition that was at the same time a prohibition. See Denz., 930.

1. Denz., 437.

at Easter, to receive communion, according to the precept of holy mother the Church[1]."

The Church evidently wishes to make this obligation a grave one. That can be easily deduced from the expressions she employs, and the penalities she inflicts. She forbids those, who do not make their Easter duty, to enter her places of worship, and deprives them of religious burial. Of course, these penalties are only *ferendæ sententiæ,* that is, not applicable until after the bishop or the Pope has formally pronounced the sentence. Moreover, she anathematizes those who deny the existence of this obligation.

According, then, to the decree of the Lateran Council and the canon of the Council of Trent, the faithful must communicate once a year, at least at Easter. The extent of this obligation can easily be grasped. The obligation to receive annual communion is first of all a real one, independent of the precise time, Easter, to which it is fixed and consequently this obligation must be fulfilled during the year. Whoever then would not receive communion at Easter would commit a grave sin, and would still be obliged to communicate after the Easter time, or he would be guilty of a new mortal sin. He who receives communion within the Easter time, fulfills both the obligation of communicating once a year and of receiving communion during the Easter time. While thus prescribing that communion should *at least* be received at Easter, the Church clearly shows that she wishes the faithful to communicate oftener[2]. We must here add that the precept of annual communion would not

---

1. Denz., 891.

2. Ordinarily, as in the case of the penitential year, the Eucharistic year extends from one Easter time included to another Easter time excluded. According to common law, Easter time extends from Palm Sunday to Low Sunday. The Ordinaries of each diocese are permitted to anticipate or prolong this time, but they must not anticipate it before the fourth Sunday of Lent, nor prolong it after the feast of the Most Holy Trinity. See *Cod. J. C.* can. 859, § 2.

be fulfilled by a sacrilegious communion. The contrary proposition was condemned by Pope Innocent XI[1].

Though the Lateran Council does not command the faithful to make their Easter duty in their own parish, it does clearly insinuate this, when it says that their proper pastor can, if he sees fit, authorize the faithful to postpone their paschal communion. The new Code specifies that the faithful should be exhorted to make their Easter duty in their parish church[2]. The reason of this regulation, no doubt, is to enable pastors to judge of the religious state of their parishes. It is also in order to gather together in one common Eucharistic banquet all the members of the parochial family, at least once a year, and to intensify and strengthen in this way the bond of Christian charity that should unite them.

When the faithful have made their Easter duty elsewhere than in their parish church, the pastor should be made acquainted with the fact, according to the new Code[3]. According to a traditional custom, all the faithful of an episcopal city may make their Easter duty in the cathedral church; priests make theirs in the church where they celebrate; both regulars and religious, nuns and sisters, as well as lay members attached to a convent, should make theirs in the chapel of the convent; wanderers, and travelers, who cannot conveniently go to their own parish, as well as soldiers, may make theirs in the church of the place where they happen to be.

Such is then the ecclesiastical precept of communion. In the words of the Lateran Council and the Council of Trent, it obliges each one of the faithful, of both sexes, as soon as they have reached the age of reason which is somewhere about the seventh year. It does not oblige those who

1. Denz., 1205.
2. *Cod. J. C.*, can. 859, § 3.
3. *Ibid.*

have lost the use of reason. It is forbidden to give communion to those who never have had the use of reason. One who has lucid moments now and then, may communicate at those times, provided he be sufficiently prepared[1].

II.

THE COMMUNION OF CHILDREN.

The Old and New Discipline of the Church. — As we have said, the reception of the holy Eucharist is not necessary for salvation by necessity of means. In the case of children, who have not yet reached the age of reason, this teaching has been defined by the Council of Trent, and is therefore an article of faith. Communion is, however, both by divine and ecclesiastical precept necessary for all the faithful from the time they have reached the age of reason, which is somewhere about the seventh year.

---

1. It has been thought better to include in the chapter on the *Minister of the Eucharistic sacrifice,* all the questions which concern the *Minister of the Sacrament of the Eucharist.* We may say here that the priest alone is the ordinary minister of communion, and the deacon, the extraordinary one. A deacon should give communion only with the permission of the Ordinary, or, when there is a grave reason, with the permission of the pastor of the place. In case of necessity, as for instance the obligation of bringing the Viaticum to a sick person in danger of death, such permission may be presumed when recourse cannot be had to the pastor of the place. See *Cod. J. C.*, can. 845. In the early ages of the Church, clerics of inferior rank were charged with bringing the Eucharist to the martyrs. It was whilst fulfilling this duty, as is well known, that the acolyte Tarcicius met his death. Such clerics however were never ministers of public communion, and were hardly ever distinguished by their privilege of carrying communion to the martyrs from simple lay folk, to whom the privilege was also granted at times. Even today, they have no more privilege in this matter than laymen, except that they should be preferred to them to administer communion, in the very rare cases when, in their absence, a layman may do the same. St. Liguori teaches that a layman can bring the Viaticum to a sick person in danger of death, who would otherwise be deprived of it. See *Theol. mor.*, l. VI, n. 237. A layman might also give himself communion, even when not fasting, in order to save the consecrated particles from the certain danger of profanation.

No one has ever denied that communion was necessary by necessity of precept for adults. However, in spite of the command of our Savior in St. John's Gospel, which was addressed to all the faithful capable of receiving Him in communion, and in spite of the clearly defined rulings of the fourth Lateran Council, it came to be thought that the precept of communion did not apply to children as soon as they reached the age of reason. The new discipline of the Church, which is a continuation of the older discipline of the Lateran, has definitely set aside that interpretation, by the following rule :

1. Children who, because of the tenderness of their age, have neither the knowledge nor the desire, *cognitionem et gustum,* of this sacrament, should not receive the Eucharist.

2. For the holy Eucharist to be administered to children in danger of death, it suffices that they know how to distinguish between the body of Christ and ordinary bread, and adore Him with respect.

3. Outside the danger of death, a greater knowledge of Christian doctrine, and a more careful preparation are rightly required, namely : the child must be instructed, as far as can be done, at least in the mysteries of faith necessary for salvation by necessity of means, and should approach the most holy Eucharist with fitting devotion.

4. The confessor or parents or guardians are to judge whether the children are sufficiently prepared for their first communion.

5. The pastor must see to it, and if necessary by an examination, that the children approach the holy table only when they have reached the use of reason, and with the proper dispositions. Likewise, he is bound to see that those children who have reached the age of reason, and who are sufficiently disposed, go as often as possible to communion[1].

---

1. *Cod. J. C.*, can. 854.

The Decree. — *Quam singulari Christus amore,* of August 8, 1910. — It is not our aim to recount the many vicissitudes which the discipline of the Church, regarding the communion of little children, met with from the very beginnings of Christianity down to the fourth Lateran Council (1215), and from this Council to the beginning of the twentieth century[1]. However, in order to grasp the great importance of this new discipline of the Church, we need touch upon the salient points of the controversy which arose, some years ago, about the decree, *Quam singulari Christus amore,* which decree has been practically incorporated in the new Code of Canon Law.

The Decree appeared on the eighth of August, 1910, and was called by its first two words, *Quam singulari.* One of the most surprising prescriptions was that of article IV, which stated that, " the obligation of the precept, respecting the communion of children, affected those especially who had charge of children, namely the parents, confessor, teachers, and pastor ". It is then the duty of the parents, before any one else, to take account of the dispositions of their children, and to see that they are sufficiently instructed, especially in what concerns the holy Eucharist, and then to present them for their first communion. Then, the confessor will examine the child to see whether he has the proper instruction and devotion. If he finds this to be the case, he will himself admit him, or allow him to approach the holy table. As is evident, the legislator in addressing the whole Church, in these terms, has in mind a normally constituted Christian family, in which parents, well instructed in their faith, realize fully their religious obligations.

Many protests were raised against this decree, and, in particular, it was said that it abrogated the rights of pastors respecting the first communion of children. This, it

1. This work has already been done by L. Andrieux, in a book *La première Communion,* Paris, 1911.

was hotly alleged, would give rise to innumerable abuses.

These protests were not without foundation, if not in that the decree impugned the rights of the pastor in the strict sense, at least because it rendered the fulfillment of the pastoral duty more difficult. That is why on Dec. 10, 1910, the cardinals, archbishops and bishops, protectors of the Catholic Institutes of Paris and Lyons, published a sort of interpretative ruling regarding the decree *Quam singulari,* approved by the Holy See, which allows the confessor to admit or send children to the holy table, under the four following conditions : 1. After being reasonably assured himself, the confessor must certify to the pastor that the child has fulfilled all the conditions demanded for the private reception of communion. 2. The confessor must then declare that with the permission of the parents, he has admitted or authorized the child to approach the holy table. 3. He should then hand over the promise (or certificate containing the promise), which has been made by the child and approved by the parents, to the effect that the child will continue to attend Sunday school or catechetical instruction until the first solemn holy communion. 4. The baptismal certificate should also be presented.

These regulations are still in force in those dioceses where they have been published. The new Code has really borrowed their general tone when it prescribes that the « pastor should see to it, and if necessary, assure himself by an examination, that the children do not approach the holy table, before having the proper use of reason, and the necessary dispositions. » Thus completed and modified, the decree *Quam singulari Christus amore* has become the new discipline of the Church, as regards the first communion of children.

The old discipline, which it might be useful to recall in concluding, now belongs to history. Under the old regime, to put it briefly, admission to first communion and the administration of the Eucharist to the first commu-

nicants, was commonly regarded in many countries, as the exclusive right of the pastor. This opinion, however, had no foundation in the Councils or decisions of the Roman Congregations, and could by no means be based on a universal custom. The first provincial council in favor of this practice was that of the province of Aix in 1850. The episcopal rulings or diocesan statutes mentioning this practice, speak of it less as a right strictly so called, as of a means to permit the pastor to keep in touch with the instruction and dispositions of children who were strangers in the parish. Moreover, almost everywhere, children in colleges and boarding schools were allowed, after a stay of two months, to make their first communion there, provided that their pastor previously consulted testified as regards their fitness and preparation. The origin of the old practice seems to have been the habit of holding first communions within the paschal time. As Easter communion was a pastoral right, it was gradually considered that the first communion of children was a part of the same right, even when it was held before or after the paschal time.

III

THE REQUIRED DISPOSITIONS

The two principal dispositions : the state of grace and the Eucharistic fast. — One who has lost the state of grace may regain it either by an act of perfect contrition joined to the desire of the Sacrament of Penance, or by the Sacrament of Penance itself.

Now, if one has committed a mortal sin, he must ordinarily obtain pardon in the Sacrament of Penance before receiving holy communion. This is because, on the one hand, the object of the Sacrament of the Eucharist is not to confer upon our souls the life of grace, but rather a special grace of spiritual nourishment, which presupposes

the supernatural life. On the other hand, as we shall see, to remove any self-illusion, the Church wishes that whoever is guilty of a grave sin, no matter what degree of contrition he may think himself to possess, should seek pardon for his sin in the Sacrament of Penance, before presenting himself for communion.

Moreover, except in a proximate or probable danger of death, the Christian, who wishes to communicate, should be fasting. This precept is the outgrowth of a proper sense of reverence towards the Blessed Sacrament.

Both these prescriptions bind *sub gravi*, and their neglect would mean a mortal sin. We shall consider them separately.

The precept concerning the state of grace, as formulated by the Council of Trent. — The obligation not to receive the body and blood of Our Lord until after being purified of all mortal sin arises from the very nature of communion, under whatever aspect it be considered. From the very beginning, St. Paul made this obligation a positive law. He who would eat the consecrated bread and drink the chalice of the Lord, unworthily, he writes to the Corinthians, would be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord, in other words, would be liable to the punishment of those who profane the body and blood of Christ. Hence, before you communicate, he continues, try yourselves, that is to say, examine, judge, and correct yourselves, and purify your dispositions and conduct.

Although this precept was sufficiently precise, the Council of Trent thought it necessary to determine it more in detail, in order to instruct those in mortal sin, not only about the obligation of purifying their consciences, but also about the manner in which they should do so, before receiving holy communion. Hence, the Council begins by quoting the Apostle commanding to the faithful, to try themselves before communion. It then continues : « The

practice of the Church clearly shows just what she has understood by this trial prescribed by the Apostle. No one in the state of mortal sin should approach the Holy Eucharist, no matter what kind of contrition he may think himself to possess, without having first made a sacramental confession. The holy Council commands that this rule be observed by all Christians, and even by priests who are obliged to celebrate, *quibus ex officio incubuerit celebrare*, unless no confessor can be found, *modo non desit illis copia confessoris*. If a priest, who has not been to confession, is nevertheless obliged to celebrate, he should go to confession as soon afterwards as possible : *Quam primum confiteatur*[1]. The Council besides teaching this doctrine in a chapter, formulates a canon anathematizing and excommunicating those who dare deny it. « If anyone says that faith alone suffices as a preparation for the reception of the Sacrament of the most Holy Eucharist, let him be anathema. And, lest so great a Sacrament be unworthily received, and with the consequent death and condemnation of the communicant, the holy Council ordains and declares that whoever thinks himself guilty of mortal sin, no matter what kind of contrition he claims to possess, is absolutely bound, if a confessor is at hand, to make a sacramental confession. If anyone is so rash as to teach, preach, or obstinately declare the contrary, or even defend it in public disputation, let him be *ipso facto* excommunicated[2] ».

---

1. Denz., 880.

2. Denz., 893 : *Si quis dixerit, solam fidem esse sufficientem præparationem ad sumendum sanctissimæ Eucharistiæ sacramentum : A. S. Et, ne tantum Sacramentum indigne atque ideo in mortem et condemnationem sumatur, statuit atque declarat ipsa sancta Synodus illis, quos conscientia peccati mortalis gravat, quantumcunque etiam se contritos existiment, habita copia confessoris, necessario præmittendam esse confessionem sacramentalem. Si quis autem contrarium docere, prædicare vel pertinaciter asserere, seu etiam publice disputando defendere præsumpserit, eo ipso excomunicatus exsistat.*

Thus, the decree of the Council obliges *sub gravi,* and there is an excommunication *latæ sententiæ,* that is incurred by the very commission of the fault, levied against any one who teaches a doctrine contrary to that of the Council. Moreover it obliges the faithful, and all priests who are bound to celebrate. Any one who is conscious of being guilty of a mortal sin is subject to this law.

It may be asked what course is to be taken if there is only a doubt as to the presence of mortal sin in the soul. If the doubt be about the fact of sinning, there is no obligation to confess; one is bound only if he is certain of having sinned[1]. If, on the other hand, there is no doubt as regards the fact of sinning, but there is a doubt as to whether the sin committed be grave, the doubt must be done away with before receiving communion. If, in similar cases in the past, the penitent's confessor or spiritual director assured him that he had not committed a grave sin, he can safely conclude that the sin is not mortal and hence need not go to confession. If the contrary be the case, he must receive absolution, before going to communion[2]. There is hardly any need of remarking that the case of a person in doubt must not be confused with that of one who has involuntarily forgotten to confess a mortal sin. Such a person is not obliged to go to confession again, before receiving communion.

The Council of Trent, however, makes one exception. All the faithful, both laymen and priests, who are conscious of mortal sin, no matter what kind of contrition they think they possess, are obliged to go to confession before receiving communion, unless, as the text specifies, it is urgently necessary to communicate, and no confessor is present.

These two conditions would be realized in the case of a layman who would have forgotten that he was guilty of

---

1. See Alph. de Liguori, *H. Apost.*, tract. XV, n. 34.
2. See A. Lehmkuhl, *De SS. Eucharistiæ sacramento*, n. 205.

a mortal sin, until he had already approached the holy table. He could scarcely withdraw before receiving, without injuring seriously his own reputation; on the other hand, in this case, it would be impossible to go to confession. Consequently, he could communicate without going to confession, provided he makes an act of perfect contrition before receiving holy communion.

The exception made by the Council of Trent has particular reference to priests. If a priest finds himself guilty of a mortal sin before celebrating mass, and hence before receiving communion, he must go to confession, no matter what kind of contrition he possesses, unless the obligation to celebrate is urgent, *ex officio incubuerit celebrare*, and moreover, unless no confessor be at hand, *desit copia confessoris*. He must however, in this case, as the Council prescribes, go to confession as soon afterwards as possible, *quam primum confiteatur*. For a priest in mortal sin, the following cases would be sufficient to constitute an urgent need: if he were not conscious of his sin until mass is begun; likewise, if his parishioners are obliged to hear mass, for example on Sundays, and holydays of obligation; or, if he could not abstain from celebrating without injuring his reputation, as would happen if he refused to say a funeral or nuptial mass. He is also justified in saying mass, if it is necessary to consecrate a host for the administration of the Viaticum [1].

A priest is considered to be without a confessor, if there is no other priest on the premises, and if he himself, either because of lack of time, or the length of the distance, or sickness, or the condition of roads, or the inclemency of the weather, is unable to journey to another parish for confession [2]. He is also without a confessor when, even though another priest is present, he could not make his confession

1. See A. Tanquerey, *Syn. Theol. dogm., De SS. Eucharistia*, n. 141.
2. *Ibid.*

to him without causing him some grave injury, as for example, a very rare case, without gravely scandalizing him[1]. Finally he is dispensed from confessing, if the only priest he can find is one who is commonly known to be without jurisdiction. If the sin of the priest who is to celebrate is reserved, either in itself or because of a censure, and the only priest who could hear his confession has not the faculties to absolve him, he is not bound to go to confession[2].

However, a priest thus guilty of mortal sin, who had to celebrate before going to confession, is obliged to go to confession as soon afterwards as possible, under pain of committing another mortal sin. This is a strict precept, and not a mere counsel, as is seen from the decision of Pope Alexander VII[3]. The obligation to confess as soon as possible does not mean, at the priest's leisure, nor even at his accustomed time, but it means, as soon as it is within his power. The contrary proposition was condemned by Alexander VII[4]. This rule, however is not so rigorous as to mean that upon leaving the altar, the priest must immediately confess his sin to a priest. The law should be interpreted to mean as soon as possible morally, and should be lived up to as far as circumstances permit. If the priest is obliged to celebrate again on the morrow, and can go to confession before approaching the altar, he is obliged to do so without any more delay. If, on the other hand, he is not obliged to say mass, he may delay his confession two or three days even though he have the opportunity of going to confession[5].

The Eucharistic fast. — Our Savior instituted the

---

1. *Ibid.*
2. *Ibid.*
3. Denz., 1138.
4. *Ibid.*, 1139.
5. See Alph. De Liguori, *op. cit.*, n. 266. — Card. Gousset, *Théol. Mor., De l'Eucharistie*, n. 194.

Eucharist after he had first eaten the Jewish Pasch with His disciples. Hence, in the earliest times, it was the custom to celebrate the Eucharist, after a meal taken in common. This practice was certainly followed in Jerusalem [1], Corinth [2], and Smyrna [3]. It must have spread nearly everywhere. And yet in Africa, in the time of Tertullian [4], and St. Cyprian [5], the Eucharist was received in the morning before any other nourishment. At the same time, in Alexandria, Origen recommended fasting to the faithful as a fitting preparation for the heavenly banquet [6].

According to St. Augustine, the Eucharistic fast was everywhere observed in his time [7]. The Constitution of the Egyptian Church [8], and the Canons of Hippolytus [9], made this fasting a precept. There was an exception made for the Church of Alexandria, where on Saturday evening, the Eucharist was celebrated after the Agape [10]. Likewise, at the end of the fourth century both in Africa [11], and in Gaul [12], on the evening of Holy Thursday, there was a common repast taken before the Eucharist.

These were the last examples of the ancient practice to disappear. They are the proverbial exceptions which strengthen the rule. We can safely say that the Eucharistic fast was strictly imposed upon the faithful from the fourth century. It was first contained in the official acts of the third

---

1. *Act.*, II, 42.
2. I *Cor.*, XI.
3. See IGNAT., *Ad Smyrn.*, n. 8.
4. *De corona*, III; *P. L.*, II, 79.
5. *Epist.*, LXIII, 16.
6. *In Gen., homil.*, X; *P. G.*, XII, 288.
7. *Epist. ad Januar*, 8; *P. L.*, XXXIII, 203.
8. See FUNK, *Didascal. et Const.*, t. II, p. 115.
9. See L. DUCHESNE, *Christian Worship*, App., *The Canons of Hippolytus*, can. 205.
10. SOCRAT., *H. E.*, l. V, XXII; *P. G.*, LXVII, 636.
11. *Epist. ad Januar.*, 9, *loc. cit.*, 204.
12. MANSI, t. IX, 952.

Council of Carthage 397[1], and later in those of the Council of Constance, 1445[2]. Notwithstanding the example set by Christ, the latter Council declared that the Eucharist must not be received after a repast, nor in any other condition except a state of fasting, outside the case of necessity.

This precept obliges us to abstain from all kinds of food from midnight. Moreover, the hour of midnight must be accepted in its strictest sense.

Hence, no food, liquid or solid, can be taken. No matter how small the quantity, once it is taken, the fast is broken and the person is forbidden *sub gravi*, to receive communion except in case of necessity. One must be certain, however, that the fast is broken, so that, if after examination any doubt persists, one can safely judge that the fast is unbroken.

Under the name of solid or liquid food we understand, first of all, whatever is digestible. That which is not affected by the gastric juices is of course not digestible, as for instance a piece of metal, a small stone, hair, or a finger nail. Moreover to break one's fast, this digestible body must come from the outside. Saliva or blood flowing from the gums does not break the fast, nor do the particles of food that remain wedged in between the teeth. The mouth can be washed, provided the liquid be expelled. If, on the contrary anything soluble in the saliva, such as sugar, were put into the mouth after midnight and swallowed, the fast would certainly be broken. In addition, this digestible substance which enters the body should be taken in eating or drinking, *sumptum esse per modum cibi aut potus*, and not through the exercise of other physiological function. A raindrop, or snow flake or small fly drawn in by respiration do not break one's fast.

The law of fasting is evidently very severe. There are

---

1. *Ibid.*, t. III, 885.
2. Denz., 626.

a few exceptions to it, however, some of which have reference to the celebrant, and others, to the communicant.

For instance, a priest may celebrate mass without fasting, if the omission of the celebration would be a source of grave scandal to the faithful. However, the mere precept that obliges the faithful to hear mass does not constitute a sufficient motive when the possibility of giving scandal does not exist[1]. A priest may also say mass without fasting, when it is necessary to complete the sacrifice, either because he perceives at the moment of communion that the contents of the chalice over which he has said the words of consecration are not wine[2], or because he has to take the place of a priest who had to discontinue mass after the consecration. Finally, this same permission is given to a priest who has to consecrate a host, in order to administer the holy Viaticum. The reason of this is that the precept of receiving communion at the hour of death is of divine precept, and hence takes precedence over any ecclesiastical regulation concerning the fast.

The lay communicant is dispensed from the law of fasting as often as he must and can receive the holy Viaticum. He is likewise exempted if he feels he should communicate, even without fasting, in order to preserve his reputation or to avoid scandal. The one and only instance of this latter exemption occurs when the communicant does not realize he has broken his fast, until he is already kneeling at the holy table. He can also receive communion without fasting in order to save the sacred species from profanation.

Let us add that for some years past, the severity of the law of fasting has been greatly mitigated for the sick. By the sick we do not mean those who are in danger of death, and who consequently may receive the Viaticum.

---

1. See Lehmkuhl, *Casus conscientiæ*, t. II, 48, ad 2um.
2. See *Missale romanum*, *De defectibus*, IV.

Santa Barbara, California

Nor are we concerned with those who do fast and who ask that the Eucharist be brought to them. We refer rather to those who are continually ill, who are confined to their room, and are unable to fast. If such persons have been sick for a month, and there is no certain hope of speedy recovery, their confessor can authorize them to communicate once or twice a week, after taking some liquid nourishment such as medicine, tonic, broth, coffee or any liquid containing v. g. tapioca, crushed toast, or some other such food which will not destroy the liquid character of the nourishment, nourishment taken *per modum potus*[1].

This then is the law of fasting as enjoined and defined by the Church. As we have already said, this law came from the realization of the respect to be shown to the Blessed Sacrament. Certain modifications of the general law have been introduced only because the welfare of souls seemed to demand them.

It is this same sense of deep respect that causes the Church to require from the faithful decency in deportment and dress, in the performance of a religious act so important and sublime as the reception of Our Lord. We approach the holy table to share in the sacrifice of Christ, to become one with Him, to draw therefrom a renewal of that supernatural life which alone can help us break the bonds of our fallen nature. A worldly display of vanity would constitute a damnable contradiction of the interior dispositions that should animate the communicant's soul.

---

1. The decree of the S. C. of the Council, of Dec. 7, 1906, distinguished between communion brought from without, and communion given by the priest without leaving the house. In the former case permission could be given by the confessor to receive communion only once or twice a month; whereas in the latter case it could be given once or twice a week. See *Acta Sanctæ Sedis*, t. XXXIX, p. 603. Now, article 858, n. 2, of the New Code does away with this distinction. In both cases the confessor may authorize the reception of communion once or twice a week.

IV

Frequent Communion.

The practice of communion from the beginning of Christianity to the Council of Trent. — In the early Church, the faithful received communion as often as they assisted at the Eucharistic celebration, which according to the *Didache* and St. Justin took place every Sunday. At the end of the second century, according to Tertullian, the faithful received communion not only on Sunday but also on station days, that is to say regularly every Wednesday and Friday. From the third century, as we are told by St. Cyprian, in the Church in Africa, the faithful communicated every day, unless prevented by the commission of some grave fault. They did this in order to strengthen themselves to brave the sufferings or martyrdom. Daily communion continued in Africa during the fourth and fifth centuries. It existed at the same time in Rome. At Milan, however, where the Oriental custom was followed, communion was not so frequent.

In Asia Minor, in the fourth century, it was the custom to communicate four times a week : Wednesday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. At Constantinople, many of the faithful received communion only two or three times a year. This negligence was condemned by St. John Chrysostom, who praised those who worthily received communion every day, and whose lives free from reproach were filled with all good works, with purity and piety[1].

From the end of the fifth century, throughout the Church, the faithful began to fall away from the practice of frequent communion. In the sixth century in Gaul, communion was

---

1. *De beato Philog.*, VI ; *P. G.*, XLVIII, 755 ; — *In I Cor., homil.* XXVIII, 1 ; *P. G.*, LXI, 233.

received only on solemn feasts[1]. According to the Venerable Bede, († 735), the Anglo-Saxons received communion at Christmas, Epiphany and Easter[2]. The diocesan synod of Ratisbon (799) complained that the faithful did not even go to communion once in the year[3]. During the ninth and tenth centuries in France, the faithful communicated at Christmas, Easter and Pentecost[4]. The same custom existed in the first half of the thirteenth century[5]. Hence, in determining more exactly the divine precept to receive communion from time to time during life, the Lateran Council (1215) must have been a sharp call to order for many, when it declared that « all the faithful should receive reverently the Sacrament of the Eucharist at least at Easter[6]. It must be here remarked, however, that during this long period, daily communion was always the custom in monasteries and communities of clerics[7].

Moreover, from the sixth century on, Popes and Bishops were unceasing in their pleas for frequent communion, pointing especially to the example of the early Christians. From the second half of the thirteenth century, in particular, theologians were almost unanimous in their praise of frequent and daily communion[8]. St. Thomas taught that we should receive communion frequently just as we receive bodily nourishment, in order to repair the losses caused in our supernatural life by exterior occupations and the inclinations of our fallen nature. One should communicate daily,

---

1. This is clear from the eighteenth canon of the Council of Agde (506). See Mansi, t. VIII, 327.

2. *Epist.* II; *P. L.*, XCIV, 665-666.

3. See Mansi, t. XIII, 1027.

4. See *ibid.*, t. XIV, 91, 103-104.

5. The biographers of St. Louis of France tell us that he received communion only five or six times a year.

6. Denz., 437.

7. See Walafrid Strabo, *De rebus ecclesiasticis*, XX; *P. L.*, CXIV, 942.

8. *In I Sent.*, dist. XII, q. III, a. 1, sol. 1 and 2.

he says, if experience shows that by such daily communion one's charity is increased and none of the respect that is due to the Sacrament is lost. On the other hand, we should refrain from communion for a time, in order to re-approach the holy table with all proper and fitting respect. Nevertheless, when it is a question of following the dictates of charity, which moves to communicate often, or the dictates of holy fear, which bids us refrain for a time, the holy Doctor shows his preference for the former disposition[1]. St. Bonaventure has the same doctrine, and recommends daily communion to those whose soul is pure and love ardent. Those however, he says, who without being too negligent or cold, feel a loss of respect for the Sacrament, should refrain for a time until that reverence has returned[2]. In the following century, Durand of St. Pourçain reproduced and emphasized the three propositions of St. Thomas, namely : daily communion is commendable, because it repairs our constant spiritual losses, just as our daily food repairs the daily losses of the body; to refrain from communion for a while is good when we deem such an action necessary and useful to awaken the desire of the Sacrament within us; when, however, it is a question of choosing between a confiding love that moves us to receive frequently, and a holy fear that would have us temporarily refrain, the former disposition is to be followed[3].

In spite of this precise and well grounded teaching of the great theologians of the middle ages, there was not much sympathy awakened for frequent and daily communion. We read that the saints of the fifteenth century received communion but once a week. The mass of the faithful approached the holy table only on great festivals. Even in

---

1. *Sum. theol.*, III, q. LXXX, a. 10.
2. *In IV Sent.*, dist. XII, part II, a. 2, q. 2.
3. *In IV Sent.*, dist. XII, q. I, a. 10.

the religious Orders, those who were not priests received only weekly communion [1].

The practice of communion from the Council of Trent to the condemnation of the Jansenists. — Summing up the teaching of Tradition, the Council of Trent prescribes that, according to our Savior's wish, the Eucharist should be received as the spiritual nourishment of our soul, to maintain and strengthen its life, and to free it from daily faults and mortal sin. Such then should be the faith and devotion of the faithful that they be in condition to receive this supernatural bread, frequently. *Ut panem illum supersubstantialem frequenter suscipere possint,* which will become for them a source of life and constant spiritual energy, and sustain them during their earthly pilgrimage, until their heavenly home is reached. How desirable then, adds the Council in another place, it is for the faithful to communicate at each Mass they hear, not merely spiritually but sacramentally, and thus to receive the more abundant fruits of the divine sacrifice [2].

To this teaching of the Council of Trent, it is well to add the pressing exhortations of the Catechism of the Council, promulgated by order of Pius V, to serve as a guide for priests on the mission in their work of teaching. We must communicate often, it reads, every month, every week, every day. The best prescription of all is one made by a pious writer of the end of the fourth century : so live, that you may be worthy of daily communion : *Sic vive, ut quotidie possis sumere* [3]. Priests engaged in the ministry, then, must impress upon their flock the great fact that just as their body

---

1. See E. Dublanchy, *Dict. de Théol. cathol.*, art. *Communion fréquente*, t. III, p. 528-533.

2. Denz., 882.

3. Pseudo-Amb., *De sacramentis*, l. V, 25; P. L. XVI, 452 : *Sic vive, ut quotidie merearis accipere.*

must be daily nourished with food, so also must their soul be nourished and strengthened by this sacrament. Spiritual nourishment is necessary for the soul as material food is for the body[1].

After the Council of Trent, the doctrine of frequent and daily communion was discussed by three different schools. To the first belonged the theologians of the Society of Jesus : Cardinal Tolet, Vasquez, Suarez and Cardinal de Lugo. They taught that ordinarily, only weekly communion should be allowed to laymen, daily communion being the privilege of only a very few[2]. St. Francis of Sales also belongs to this school, although he has a special teaching of his own, which is contained in the following quotation from the *Introduction to a devout life* : « The only conditions required for weekly communion are these : to be free from mortal sin, to have no affection for venial sin, and to be ardently desirous of receiving communion; but, for daily communion, besides all this, it is necessary to have overcome the majority of bad inclinations, and to be guided by the advice of our spiritual director[3] ».

At the same time, throughout Italy and Spain, devout people became apostles of daily communion and strove to spread the practice. Marzilla, a Benedictine, taught that no other dispositions are required for daily communion, than for any other communion. In a word, only the state of grace is necessary. If anyone of the faithful, who has been instructed in the mystery of the holy Eucharist, be in the state of grace, and desire to receive daily, his confessor should not be unwilling to grant his request[4]. Anthony of Molina, a Carthusian, writes in the same vein, counselling persons of the world to govern their conduct in

---

1. *Cat. Trid.*, 2nd part, ch. VII, n. 63.
2. See E. DUBLANCHY, *op. et loc. cit.*, pp. 535-536.
3. See *Introduction to a Devout Life*, 2nd part, ch. XX.
4. See *Memorial*, Saragosse, 1611.

accordance with the advice of their confessor. However, they should not abstain too easily from communion, even though they notice no sensible progress in the condition of their souls[1]. The same doctrine is taught by John Falconi, of the Order of Mercy. Daily communion, he says, does not require a state of perfection. This sacrament was instituted not as a reward for perfection, but as a remedy for imperfection. Provided the soul is in the state of grace, communion should be received daily, even though absolute perfection lies beyond our capabilities. Through such frequent communion, our faults are diminished and a more perfect disposition is assured[2].

Between these two schools, one of which was for moderation as regards the doctrine of frequent and daily communion, while the other strove to make the practice of frequent and daily communion universal, there arose towards the middle of the seventeenth century, the school of Jansenius. The views of the latter school were expressed in a book published by Arnauld, in 1643, and entitled, *Frequent Communion*, which title was later maliciously, though with good reason changed to *Against Frequent Communion.* Without determining at all just what he understood by frequent communion, Arnauld excluded almost all the faithful, by requiring the following conditions for frequent communion : 1. a long and severe penance performed for each and every mortal sin committed, before absolution and communion ; 2. a true devotion, consisting in a most pure and unalloyed love of God, or in the efficacious will to please God in all things. As is well known, this treatise was eminently successful in the Jansenistic world. It was, however, strongly opposed by Catholic theologians. The S. C. of the Council condemned it on February, 12, 1679. On December

1. See *Le Prêtre*, t. II, 7th part, ch. v.
2. See *Notre pain de chaque jour, transl.* COUET, p. 66.

7, 1690, Pope Alexander VIII censured the two propositions containing the conditions required by Arnauld, as a necessary preparation for frequent communion on the part of the faithful[1].

The rules of Saint Liguori regarding weekly, frequent, and daily communion. — Jansenism gradually gave way before the firm attitude of the Roman Congregations and the persuasive wisdom of the principles of moral theology espoused by St. Liguori[2].

This holy Doctor distinguished between *weekly, frequent,* and *daily communion.*

1. *Weekly communion* may be generally permitted and even advised to all those, of whatever condition or profession, who do not commit mortal sins, or do so only rarely and through weakness, but are at least resolved to strive to overcome them. Such persons are indeed exempt from positive affection towards mortal sin, which alone would hinder one from weekly communion.

Hence it follows, a) that weekly communion should not be refused to those who are content with avoiding mortal sin, although no effort is made to avoid deliberate venial sin, and there is, on the contrary, a positive affection for it : *propositum habituale peccandi venialiter.*

b) Those who fall into mortal sin through weakness rather than malice, can also be allowed to receive weekly communion, if serious efforts are made to avoid mortal sin, and there is hope of still greater efforts in the future.

---

1. Denz., 1312-1313 : *Sacrilegi sunt judicandi, qui jus ad communionem percipiendam prætendunt, antequam condignam de delictis suis pœnitentiam egerint.*

Similiter arcendi sunt a sacra communione, quibus nondum inest amor Dei purissimus et omnis mixtionis expers.

2. See *Praxis confessarii,* c. ix, n. 149-154.

2. *Frequent communion* is that which is received one or twice during the week, outside of Sunday. In general, frequent communion should be received only when there is no more affection for venial sin. Hence if venial sin is committed, it should not be through deliberate will, or in virtue of a habit with which one hates to part. This absence of affection towards venial sin should be manifested by real efforts to mortify one's passions, and to progress along the road of virtue. Nevertheless, when the confessor judges the needs of his penitent to be especially grave and pressing, frequent communion may be permitted even to those who are guilty of habitual and deliberate venial sins.

3. *Daily communion* demands the same dispositions as frequent communion; only in the former case, the dispositions should be far more perfect, and developed. When, then, the penitent's efforts have resulted in a certain subduing of his bad passions, a certain progress in virtue, and a greater facility to approach and become united to God, and when the soul is faithful to the practice of prayer, daily communion may be permitted and advised by the confessor.

These three rules of St. Liguori were followed throughout the whole of the nineteenth century. The holy Doctor always insisted that the confessor should be the deciding factor in the question of daily communion, and not those whose duties regard the external forum. Several times the Roman Congregations intervened not only to approve the rules of St. Liguori, but to sanction this particular point of his theology. The decree, *Quemadmodum*, of December 17, 1890, clearly specified that the Superiors of religious orders should not concern themselves with regulating the frequency of the communions of those in their charge, since this was in the power of confessors alone. Hence, if a religious be authorized to go to communion outside the regular community days, he has only to acquaint his superior with the fact. If the Superior objects, let him state his reasons for this stand

to the confessor of the religious in question, and abide unreservedly by his decision[1].

The doctrinal decree of the Sacred Congregation of the Council, of December 20, 1905. — From the end of the nineteenth century, in the wake of the eucharistic congresses, and the encyclical *Miræ caritatis,* of Pope Leo XIII, May 28, 1902, a great impulse was given to the practice of frequent and daily communion. Such a movement could not fail to precipitate certain sharp criticisms, which drew down even sharper answers.

Some maintained that frequent communion, when made with a positive affection for venial sin, could not help but be, first of all, culpable, since the soul which communicates with such an attachment, is itself slightly culpable, and the repetition of communion with such dispositions necessarily aggravates the degree of this guilt. Secondly, it is ineffective in this sense that it does not result in a great increase of sanctifying grace, for although communion produces its effects *ex opere operato,* these effects are always in proportion to the dispositions of the communicant. Finally, it is even harmful, because the soul communicating with this attachment to venial sin, resists numerous graces bestowed upon it, and becomes, as it were, hardened in its lukewarmness.

In replying to these arguments, others invoked the practice of the early Church, when the faithful received communion twice or three times a week outside of Sunday, and the custom of the Churches of Africa and Rome, in the third and fourth centuries, where the faithful communicated every day. Such a practice could not have existed, it was pointed out, if the faithful were all required to be free

---

1. The decrees of the Roman Congregations on this point will be found in E. Dublanchy, *Dict. de Théol. cathol., op. et loc. cit.,* pp. 539-542.

from affection to venial sin. Moreover frequent and daily communions were always efficacious, even when accompanied by some attachment to venial sin. Indeed, the only way to rid oneself of this attachment was to go to communion. In conclusion, they required the state of grace as the necessary condition for frequent and daily communion.

The faithful were counselled to follow the advice of their confessors, and all agreed that in the practice of frequent and daily communion every one should take into account his personal opportunity.

Such an important and practical controversy could not fail to have far-reaching results. On December 20, 1905, the Sacred Congregation of the Council published a doctrinal decree, enlarging upon the rules given by St. Liguori.

1. Since the Church wishes frequent and daily communion to be open to all the faithful of whatever rank and condition of life, the decree declares that no one who is in the state of grace, and who approaches the holy table with a right and devout intention, can be lawfully hindered therefrom.

2. A right intention, declares the decree, consists in this : that he who approaches the holy table should do so, not out of routine, or vain glory, or human respect, but for the purpose of pleasing God, or being more closely united with Him by charity, and of seeking this divine remedy for his weaknesses and defects.

3. Although it is preferable, continues the decree, that those who receive communion frequently and daily be free from at least deliberate venial sin and all attachment to it, nevertheless, it is sufficient that they be free from mortal sin with the purpose of never sinning in future. Through this sincere and firm will, it is impossible that daily communicants be not freed gradually from venial sins and affection for them.

This constitutes the principal part of the new discipline.

The decree then goes on to determine other points with more precision.

4. It recalls that just as the other sacraments, the sacrament of the Eucharist produces its effects *ex opere operato*, but in proportion to the dispositions of the communicant. Consequently, care is to be taken that holy communion be preceded by serious preparation, and followed by a suitable thanksgiving.

5. It prescribes that the practice of frequent and daily communion be submitted to the judgment of the confessor; but it warns the latter not to turn away from communion those who feel the need of it, when once he is assured they are in the state of grace, and have the right intention.

6. Finally, parish priests, confessors and preachers are frequently to exhort the faithful to receive frequent and daily communion. Above all, this practice should be encouraged in all religious communities, for whom the decree *Quemadmodum,* of December 17, 1890, still remains in force. It should likewise be understood that in communities with vows, where the rules prescribe certain days for the reception of communion, such rules must be regarded not as imperative, but as merely directive [1].

Conclusion. — Since, as the decree of December 20, 1905, teaches, « the frequent and daily reception of the Holy Eucharist increases our union with Jesus Christ, nourishes our spiritual life more abundantly, and strengthens our soul with all manner of virtue, and, especially, confers a more certain pledge of eternal happiness », the faithful cannot be too much encouraged to follow the practice of frequent and daily communion. The conditions that are both necessary and sufficient to receive such a divine blessing, have now been clearly determined; they consist only in the state of grace and the right intention. There are indeed many persons

1. See Denz., 1985-1989.

who will be prevented by the cares of life or social duties from receiving frequent and daily communion. The weight of such reasons is evident to all. Let such persons however recall the admonition that St. Francis de Sales gave in his time concerning weekly communion, but which he would certainly give today in the matter of frequent and daily communion : « Those who have not many worldly affairs should communicate often, because they have the time; those who have many, should do likewise, because they are in need; just as he who works much and is burdened with cares must eat of solid food many times[1] ».

ARTICLE IV

The Cultus of the Blessed Sacrament.

The Blessed Sacrament. — As soon as the words of consecration have been spoken over the bread and wine, the primary effect of the sacrament of the Eucharist has been attained : the body and blood of Christ are really present under the appearances of bread and wine. The production of this primary effect, without the second effect, that is to say, without the sacramental grace which is only bestowed by communion, is sufficient in order that the sacrament may exist[2]. Hence the Eucharist differs from the other sacraments in that it exists independently of the recipient for whom it was intended, and is not, like the others, a transient reality, but a reality that endures, one in whose presence we can dwell and to whom we can offer our homage.

The Cultus of the Blessed Sacrament. — After denying the doctrine of the real presence, the Calvinists straightway repudiated the cultus of the Blessed Sacrament, even going

1. See *Introduction to a devout life*, 2d part, ch. XXI.
2. See THOM. AQ., *Sum. theol.*, III, q. LXXIII, a. 1.

so far as to call the practice of the Catholic Church idolatry. Heresy led them on to insult and blasphemy.

On the other hand, the Catholic Church, relying on the formal teaching of the Scriptures, on the constant testimony of the Fathers, and the convincing arguments of the Doctors, acknowledges in the mystery of the Eucharist under the appearances of bread and wine, the true body and blood of Christ in His entirety, God made man, and as a consequence, loudly proclaims that we should adore Our Lord, thus present in the Eucharist, and that all the forms of worshipping the Eucharist which she has established, such as the feast of Corpus Christi, processions, and expositions of the Blessed Sacrament are absolutely legitimate.

This doctrine was first set forth by the Council of Trent in the folloving chapter. « There is no reason to doubt, that all faithful Christians, according to the constant and universal custom of the Catholic Church, are obliged to give the same worship to the Most Blessed Sacrament, as is given to the one true God. Because this sacrament was instituted by Our Lord Jesus Christ to be received by the faithful, we are none the less bound to adore it, believing, as we do, that it contains the same God of whom the Eternal Father spoke, when sending Him into the world : « Let all the Angels of God adore Him ; » the same whom the Magi falling on their knees adored, the same whom the Apostles, as Holy Writ tells us, worshipped and adored in Galilee.

« The holy Council further declares that it is a very holy and pious custom established in the Church, to set aside in the year one day and one particular feast, in order to honor and venerate with particular solemnity this august and adorable Sacrament, and to bear it in procession through the public squares and streets with all respect and pomp. For it is fitting that certain feast days should be set apart, on which all Christians may render to their Master and common Redeemer, a solemn tribute of their gratitude and thanks for this ineffable and divine gift, in which His victory and

triumph over death are represented. Truth will thus glory in its victory over lies and heresy, and will either disconcert and blight its ennemies by this universal acclamation of joy on the part of the Church, or draw them back into its ranks by the very confusion and shame with which it fills them[1] ».

The Council next draws up a special canon condemning those who deny this teaching : « If any one says that Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, should not be adored in the most Blessed Sacrament of the Eucharist, by the *cultus latriæ,* even external, and consequently that He should not be honored by any solemn or particular feast, nor solemnly borne in procession, as has ever been the praiseworthy and universal practice of the Church, nor publicly exposed for the adoration of the faithful, and that those who worship Him are idolators; let him be anathema[2] ».

History of the Cultus of the Eucharist. — The Lutherans believe in the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist. According to their doctrine however, this presence lasts only from the consecration to the communion. Some of their adherents would limit this presence only to the moment of communion. We have already indicated that this doctrine has no foundation in history, and that the Lutherans adopted it for the sole purpose of destroying the worship of the Blessed Sacrament[3], on the plea that the worship of the Blessed Sacrament came into existence only in the middle ages.

The Savior instituted the Eucharist first of all to be our spiritual nourishment; the mere thought of that great gift should be sufficient to inspire us all the sentiments we should possess and express. The first Christians loved to receive

---

1. Denz., 878.
2. Denz., 888.
3. See above, p. 340.

this divine food, and surrounded it with the greatest religious veneration. We may recall v. g. the recommendations made by St. Paul to the Corinthians, admonishing them to purify their hearts before they receive, and warning them that the unworthy communicant is guilty of the body and blood of the Lord[1]. Strictly speaking, however, there was no *worship* given to the Holy Eucharist at this period.

The same attitude is found among the Christians of the second and third centuries. The Eucharist was their heavenly food. They held it in the greatest reverence, although they did not make it the object of any worship. « We cannot allow anyone, » writes Tertullian, « to drop any part of the consecrated bread or spill any of the contents of the chalice[2] ». Origen tells us of a similar fear on the part of the faithful : « You are accustomed », he writes, « to share in our mysteries, and after you have received the body of the Lord, you hold it with great caution and respect, lest any particle of it fall upon the ground or be lost. You believe yourselves culpable and rightly so, if through your negligence, any part of the Eucharist fall to the ground[3].

In the fourth century the Holy Eucharist was worshipped and adored, pretty nearly everywhere in the Church. This worship grew up first of all at Jerusalem, as we may judge from the advice given by St. Cyril to his first communicants : « When », he says, « you approach (to receive the Eucharist), take care not to extend your palm, and do not keep your fingers apart, but place your left hand underneath your right, and thus form a throne for the King you are about to receive, and then receive the body of Christ in the hollow of your hand, while saying : *Amen.*

« After gazing at the sacred body, and thus sanctifying your eyes, eat that which you have received, taking care

1. 1 *Cor.*, XI, 17-29.
2. *De Corona militis,* III.
3. *In Exod.*, homil., XIII, 3; *P. G.*, XII, 391

not to lose any part of it. Should any of it be lost, consider such a loss as a real amputation of your own members. If anyone were to give you golden spangles, would you not hold them with great care, lest any should be lost or damaged? Should you not therefore with much more care and attention see that you lose not a single crumb of what is infinitely more precious than gold and precious stones?

« Having received the body of Christ, now draw near the cup of His blood, not extending your hands, but bending low (κύπτων), and sanctify yourself by a sort of adoration and worship (καὶ τρόπῳ προσκυνήσεως καὶ σεβασμάτος), at the same time saying *Amen*. Then receive the blood of Christ, and while your lips are still moist, dry them with your hands, which you should then apply to your eyes, forehead, and the rest of the senses, in order to sanctify them[1] ».

St. Ambrose uses the same language at Milan. To Christ's body present under the appearances of bread and wine he applies the following verse from the psalm : « *Et adorate scabellum pedum ejus, quoniam sanctum est*[2] ». His commentary is substantially as follows : « God's footstool is the earth. But how can the earth be adored? It can be adored only in the mystery of the Eucharist, where the body of Christ, which like every body springs from the earth, is adored[3] ».

In saying that the body of Christ must be adored, St. Ambrose undoubtedly means adoration of the same nature and degree as that paid to God alone. No matter how realistic the expression may seem, it is strictly correct. The body of Christ must be worshipped because of the hypostatic union which makes His body the flesh of the Word of God; this worship is directed to the very Word of God.

Towards the end of the fourth century and during the

---

1. *Catech.*, XXIII (mystag. V), XXI-XXII; *P. G.*, XXXIII, 1123-1126.
2. Ps. XCVIII, 5.
3. *De Spiritu Sancto*, l. III, c. XI; *P. L.*, XVI, 794-795.

entire first third of the fifth, St. Augustine repeats and develops the doctrine of St. Ambrose, regarding the cultus of the Eucharist. He too interprets the verse : « *Et adorate scabellum pedum ejus, quoniam sanctum est* », as referring to the worship due to the body of Christ present in the Eucharist. He then adds that « no one should eat the flesh of Christ, before having first adored[1] ».

From the sixth to the ninth century, there is abundant evidence regarding the worship of the Blessed Sacrament. The Eucharist is represented as the central point of the mass liturgy, the account of the institution of the Eucharist recited in the Mass being the fundamental theme about which all other prayers will in time be grouped, both those contained in the Mass of the faithful, and those in the Mass of the catechumens, or even those contained in the preparation for Mass[2]; already the Eucharist is the true center of all Catholic worship[3]. In the liturgy of this period there is one rite which seems to be of special importance. It is the slight elevation made by the priest, while reciting the doxology at the end of the canon, in order to present the consecrated host for the adoration of the faithful. This ceremony is very old. The exact date of its origin cannot be determined, but is was certainly in use in the ninth century in the Roman Mass, as can be judged from the evidence of the first *Ordo Romanus*[4].

Had the Lutherans asserted only that the worship of the Holy Eucharist grew up in the middle ages, no one would have dreamed of contradicting them. Such an asser-

---

1. *Enarratio in Ps.* XCVIII, 9; *P. L.*, XXXVII, 1264.

2. We refer the reader to our study of the formation of the Roman canon and of the Latin mass, pp. 490-493. All documents on which our discussion is based are anterior to the eleventh century.

3. See Duchesne, *Christian Worship.*, ch. ix, xii-xv. — Dom Cabrol, *Liturgical Prayer*, part viii : *Eucology.* — A. Vigourel, *Manuel de Liturgie*, Paris, 1918.

4. See Muratori, *Liturgia romana vetus*, t. III, *Ordo Romanus*, i, 16.

tion, however could not have sufficed to explain their aversion for the worship of the Blessed Sacrament. Certain it is that the development of the worship was considerable in the middle ages, and this was due both to a reaction against certain heresies, and especially to the Eucharistic doctrines expounded by the great theologians of the thirteenth century. This period witnessed the rise of three new forms of Eucharistic worship : the elevation of the sacred host after the consecration; the exposition of the Blessed Sacrament; and finally, the feast of *Corpus Christi* and the processions of the Blessed Sacrament.

The elevation of the Blessed Sacrament after the consecration, or the great elevation, began in France in the eleventh century, and as early as the thirteenth century was accepted in every Church in the West. Only the host was elevated at first, the elevation of the chalice came later. It is a question whether this liturgical ceremony was introduced as a protest against the error of Berengarius, as Mabillon affirms, or as a protest against that of Peter the Chanter, who maintained that the consecration of the bread was effected only at the moment of the consecration of the wine. There are two main reasons that account for its success. First of all, there was the desire to offer the Blessed Sacrament to the adoration of the faithful. The synod of Mayence (1261) prescribed that the knee should be bent in adoration at the moment of the elevation, or, according to Yves of Chartres[1], at the sound of the bell. The second reason was to satisfy the desire of the people to behold the Blessed Sacrament, and so in the thirteenth century, the faithful did not bow the head at the elevation, but they gazed upon the Blessed

1. See J. Corblet, *Histoire du sacrement de l'Eucharistie*, t. II, l. XVIII, ch. II, pp. 356-364.

Sacrament[1]. This practice seems to be growing up again in our own day. Many bow their head in adoration, when the priest genuflects, and then gaze devoutly upon the Blessed Sacrament during the elevation.

The mere glimpse, however, of the body of Christ during the elevation did not satisfy the piety of the faithful. It was then deemed expedient to place the Blessed Sacrament in monstrances, so that it could be looked at and adored by the people at leisure. The practice of thus exposing the Blessed Sacrament for considerable length of time was, at first, only allowed on the feast of *Corpus Christi* and during the octave, although the privilege was soon extended to other days. Coincident with this exposition, we have the benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. For a long time indeed, the custom had existed of blessing the faithful with sacred objects, such as the cross and various relics. This gradually led to the rite of Benediction. In the time of St. Charles Borromeo, who encouraged and practiced the Forty Hour's Devotion[2], the Benediction service had become very widespread.

The most remarkable institution of all, however, was that of the feast of *Corpus Christi*. It was established in 1264 by Pope Urban IV, after certain revelations made to St. Juliana of Retines. This solemnity was called the *Festum Corporis Domini*. An office of the Blessed Sacrament was drawn up by St. Thomas. It had been the custom for some time, however, to carry the Blessed Sacrament in procession. Lanfranc tells us that in his time, that is in the eleventh century, the Blessed Sacrament was borne in procession in a tabernacle, on Palm Sunday. In the beginning of the

---

1. See A. Boudinhon, *Études historiques sur nos dévotions populaires, Revue du Clergé Français*, t. XXIX, pp. 258-259.

2. See, on the institution of the Forty Hours' Devotion, Thurston, *Lent and Holy Week*, p. 127-132.

fourteenth century, this procession became a part of the feast of *Corpus Christi*[1].

It is clear from this historical sketch that whilst the worship of the Blessed Sacrament developed in a very particular manner in the early middle ages, it can none the less be traced back to the beginning of the fourth century. Although, before that time, no worship, strictly so called, was rendered to the Blessed Sacrament, the Holy Eucharist was nevertheless always venerated with the greatest respect. From this intense feeling in the hearts of the faithful, arose the different forms of Eucharistic worship, according as circumstances permitted. As the Council of Trent has said, the principal end of the Eucharist is the nourishment of our souls. Only secondarily, does it become the object of our worship. But although the worship of the Eucharist is but a secondary aim of the mystery, it is none the less demanded by the Christian's faith in the mystery of the real presence. We are now in a position to estimate the statements of the Lutherans. The motive they brought forth to reject the worship of the Blessed Sacrament was only a pretext : they proscribed the worship of the Blessed Sacrament, because they did not wish to sanction the practice of good works.

---

1. See J. Corblet, *op. cit.*, ch. III, pp. 369-412,

CHAPTER V

THE EUCHARISTIC SACRIFICE

Since man is composed of body and soul, he owes to God both an internal and external worship, and since we live in society, we likewise owe to God both a private and a public worship. All these are prescriptions of the natural law. Consequently, there must be some public act whereby men may offer to God the honor that is due Him. This act must especially signify the external and public honor due to God, and as such must not be offered, even as a token of an altogether different honor, to any other person but God. This act of public worship is called sacrifice.

This general idea of sacrifice can be reached by reason alone; we now come to what revelation has to say on the notion of sacrifice.

Sacrifice is a symbolic rite. According to the teaching of St. Thomas, an external sacrifice shows forth the existence of an internal, spiritual sacrifice, that is to say, the act of adoration by which we acknowledge God as our Creator and Sovereign Master, in giving Him all that we are : our intellect, that it may only strive to know Him; our will, that it may wholly submit to His law; and our body, that it may become the willing instrument of our soul in the service of God[1]. Sacrifice, however, may not be a mere symbol of ado-

1. *Sum. theol.*, II^{a} II^{æ} q. LXXXV, a. 2 : *Oblatio sacrificii fit ad aliquid si-*

ration, but in addition, an act of expiation for the offense caused to God by sin. The latter element is, however, merely accidental, and the sacrifice could exist without it.

If, then, sacrifice is a symbol, the external and sensible sign of an internal and spiritual sacrifice, it follows that it must be determined by positive institution; for none of the external acts we perform is sufficiently capable of itself to signify the honor due to God. Not that sacrifice is something entirely conventional, but as in the case of the sacraments, there must be some proportion between the sign and the deep inner feeling whereby man recognizes his Creator and Master.

From the very beginning, sacrifice has always been viewed as the oblation or offering of a sensible thing to God, i. e. as the gift of some sensible object to God, in the course of the liturgical service, by the destruction of the gift itself. If the gift were animate, this destruction was effected in a bloody manner; if inanimate, v. g. if some special or even ordinary bread, by combustion; and if a liquid, as for instance, oil or wine, by an effusion according to a special rite. Thus, the two terms sacrifice and offering have very often been used, one for the other, although in biblical language, a sacrifice is not any oblation whatsoever, but the offering of a victim, an animate being, by immolation, or the shedding of its blood[1].

---

gnificandum. Significat autem sacrificium quod offertur exterius, interius spirituale sacrificium, quo anima seipsam offert Deo, secundum illud Psalmistæ : « Sacrificium Deo spiritus contribulatus », quia, sicut supra dictum est, exteriores actus religionis ad interiores ordinantur. Anima autem se offert Deo in sacrificium, sicut principio suæ creationis, et sicut fine suæ beatificationis.

1. In biblical language, the word oblation was reserved to the offering of those inanimate objects which either accompanied the bloody sacrifice, or else was made apart from it. Except in rare cases, as in the offering of the loaves of proposition, the oblation also took place by the destruction of the thing offered. See H. Lesêtre, art. *Oblation*, in *Dict. de la Bible*, t. IV, pp. 1725-1731. The Bible also refers to the offering of an animate object, made in an

It is certain that the offering or sacrifice of a sensible thing, which we may call the external sacrifice, is an expression of an internal sacrifice. The latter is an act of adoration by which we acknowledge God as our Creator and Sovereign Master, by giving Him all that we are. This gift of ourselves is exteriorly expressed by the offering of a sensible thing. God indeed does not need our gifts. What He asks is not so much the use of the things we have in His service, as the homage we do render Him, by giving Him freely and lovingly all that we are. This spirit of sacrifice and devotion is admirably expressed by the destruction of the sensible object, which takes place in the external sacrifice.

If it should happen that an animate being were offered to God, not under its own accidents, but under the appearances of two inanimate substances, such as bread and wine, — all of which supposes the miracle of transubstantiation, — there could be real sacrifice as long as the victim is offered by being placed under those appearances, in an outward condition of death. This is so because sacrifice must be an external and sensible sign. In our supposition, the victim is necessarily hidden, and appears only under the borrowed appearances of two other substances. What is essential in this case is not the real destruction of the victim, since if this really took place, it could not be perceived, but its mystical destruction, i. e. its oblation under the distinct and separate species of bread and wine, so that, if we consider the efficacy of the rite accomplishing this fact, the body alone is present under the appearances of bread, and the blood alone under the appearances of wine. Thus the victim is offered to God, while the body and blood are to all appearances, separated, and placed in a certain outward condition of destruction or death. It is evident that this oblation by mys-

---

unbloody manner, as an oblation. Thus the book of *Numbers* uses the word oblation to signify the consecration of the levites to the Lord for the service of the temple. See *Num.*, VIII, 13.

tical immolation is as much suited to signify an invisible sacrifice, as the immolation of the victim itself, nay, it is far more expressive than destruction typified by libations, which, as all admit, suffice for a sacrifice. Undoubtedly it has not the same expiatory character as an oblation by real immolation. It is none the less a true sacrifice, since, as we have already pointed out, expiation is not an essential part of sacrifice[1].

We should add that since sacrifice is an act of external public or social worship, that is, an act performed in the name of society, it must be accomplished by a public official, representing the society in whose name he acts. This official is the priest.

We are now in a position to give a complete definition of a sacrifice : It is the offering, by real or mystical destruction, of a sensible gift made to God by the priest, as the properly instituted sign of that adoration which man owes to his Creator : *Oblatio rei corpoream, per realem ejus aut mysticam destructionem, a sacerdote Deo facta, in signum legitime institutum honoris et reverentiæ quam homo debet Creatori suo*[2].

---

1. In the Old Law, the sacrifice was expiatory only when the victim offered was really immolated. This was because the honor due to God wronged by sin, honor which should have been accompanied by an infinite reparation, — could only be expressed — so the Jews were taught — by an offering wherein a real immolation of the victim took place. Nevertheless it was conceded that he who sinned by giving false testimony could satisfy his obligation by a simple oblation, if he had not the means to purchase a victim. See *Lev.*, v, 4, 11. This exception, however, rather strengthens than weakens the above rule, and so the doctrine has been maintained by Catholic theologians. The sacrifice of the Cross is expiatory, or to speak more explicitly, satisfactory and meritorious. The sacrifice of the Mass, on the contrary, is not strictly speaking expiatory. It is the sacrifice by which we make our own the satisfactions and merits of the sacrifice of the Cross. By thus separating two words that have etymologically the same meaning, and which in biblical literature are constantly interchanged, Catholic theology teaches that the sacrifice of the Cross is *expiatory* or satisfactory and meritorious, while the sacrifice of the Mass is only *propitiatory*.

2. See L. Billot, *De sacrificio Missæ proœmium*, 1.

With this definition we shall proceed to examine whether the sacrifice of the Eucharist is a *true* sacrifice. Then we shall consider the *effects* of this sacrifice, its *minister*, and finally explain the economy of its beautiful liturgy.

ARTICLE I

The Eucharistic Sacrifice is a true sacrifice.

Calvary and the Altar. — A sacrifice, then, essentially consists in the offering of a sensible gift, really or mystically destroyed by the priest, to express our adoration and recognition of God's sovereignty. This adoration consists in offering and giving to God everything that we are by the immolation of our whole being to God. The essential character of a sacrifice, then, its true *raison d'être*, lies in its being *latreutic*, or an act of adoration.

While sinful man thus renders to God the homage that is due Him, he is likewise obliged to manifest sorrow for his sins, in order to obtain pardon. A sacrifice will be then both an act of adoration and of propitiation. A sacrifice that is propitiatory in a very special degree will nevertheless always be more or less implicitly an act of adoration.

But since we cannot honor God, and implore pardon of our sins, without thanking Him for His blessings, and asking new gifts of Him, sacrifice, besides being an act of adoration and propitiation, must also be *eucharistic*, an *act of thanksgiving* and *impetratory*. The sacrifice that is propitiatory in a very special degree will also always be more or less implicitly an act of adoration, thanksgiving, and impetration.

Under the Old Law, the distinction between the chief sacrifices was based upon the purpose for which they were offered. First of all came the *holocausts* or sacrifices of adoration. They consisted of a bloody or an unbloody sacri-

fice, the latter being a simple oblation. The victim was completely burned to show that God is the sovereign Master and that man belongs entirely to Him. The offering of flour, oil and incense, was likewise burned, save the two thirds of the flour, which were given to the priests, and which they had to eat in the holy place, without any mixture of leaven [1].

Then there were the *sacrifices of prosperity* called by the Greeks and the Latins *salutary sacrifices,* or *peaceful sacrifices*, and which are now designated by the name of *peace-offerings*. These were divided into *sacrifices of thanksgiving, votive sacrifices*, offered to fulfil a vow, and *voluntary sacrifices* [2].

Like the holocausts, they consisted either of a bloody or of an unbloody offering. The victim as well as the matter for the oblation was divided into several parts. The first was consumed by fire, the second was eaten by the priest, and in private sacrifices, the rest was eaten by those who offered the sacrifice [3].

Expiatory sacrifices or *sacrifices for the remission of sin* were bloody sacrifices [4]. The victim was partly consumed and partly eaten by the priests. Like the holocausts and peace-offerings, the expiatory sacrifices were either public, i. e. offered for the sins of the people, or private, i. e. offered for individual transgressions. On the day of the great Atonement, five days before the feast of the Tabernacles, the high priest having first immolated the victim and sprinkled with the blood the four corners of the altar, poured some blood towards the veil of the Holy of Holies.

---

1. *Lev.*, I, 3-17; VI, 14-18. — *Num.*, VIII, 8; XV, 4-10.

2. See HADR. RELAND, *Antiquitates sacræ veterum Hebræorum*, 3rd part, c. V.

3. *Lev.*, III. — *Num.*, XV, 4-10.

4. The sacrifice of the leper was an exception, for it was accompanied by oblations.

Then entering into the Holy of Holies, he poured some blood towards the upper part of the ark of the covenant, which was the special abode of God, and which was called the propitiatory, the place where God pardoned His people. This was the great sacrifice of expiation for the sins of the people [1].

Besides these principal sacrifices, there were others, partly bloody, and partly unbloody, or wholly unbloody, in which flour, bread and sometimes wine were used. The only difference between most of these was the day on which they were performed [2].

Now, all the sacrifices of the Old Law were figures and harbingers of the Messianic sacrifice. Consequently they were to be abolished after the great atonement of Calvary, and to-day they have actually ceased to exist. Having, at the very outset of His ministry, foretold His death, and presented it as the ranson of the world, Our divine Savior, at once priest and victim, sacrificed Himself on the cross of Calvary, in order to expiate the sins of men, thus realizing and consequently abolishing all the sacrifices of the Old Law that had prefigured His own sacrifice [3]. While the sacrifice of our Savior is the supreme propitiatory sacrifice, it is at the same time the most perfect sacrifice of adoration, of thanksgiving and impetration [4].

---

1. *Lev.*, IV; XVI. See HADR. RELAND, *op. cit.*, 3rd part, c. III; 4th part, c. V.

2. See H. LESÊTRE, art. *Sacrifice*, in *Dict. de la Bible*, t. V, pp. 1319-1337.

3. The sacrifices of the Old Law have been abolished both *de jure* and *de facto*. During the siege of Jerusalem by Titus, (June 10, 70) « perpetual sacrifice ceased to be offered to God, for want of men, and the people were greatly afflicted, » writes JOSEPHUS the historian, *Bell. Jud.*, VI, II, This marked the end of the mosaic sacrifices. They were never to be offered again by the Jews.

4. It must be here noted that no impetratory sacrifice is met with in the Old Law. This is because it is implied in all sacrifices, and particulary in the propitiatory sacrifice. To render God propitious is the same as to obtain the pardon of our sins, and the remission of our eternal and temporal punishment It is also to incline Him to give us His grace and those temporal blessings that

But on the eve of His death, however, the Savior had already instituted another sacrifice, which was to endure for all time in order to reproduce and complete the sacrifice of the cross. This is the Eucharistic sacrifice, the sacrifice of the Mass[1].

We shall first prove the *existence of this sacrifice;* then we shall determine its *essential act.* In this way we shall clearly show that the Eucharistic sacrifice is a true sacrifice.

I

The Existence of the Eucharistic Sacrifice

Teaching of the Church. — According to the definition of the Council of Trent, the Eucharist is not only a sacrament, that is, a sensible sign producing in the soul of the communicant, the grace of supernatural nourishment which it signifies; it is, in addition, a true sacrifice, in the strict sense of the word, that is to say, it is the offering of a victim by the immolation of the same[2].

Thus the Mass is a real absolute sacrifice. The same Christ who offered Himself in a bloody immolation on Calvary, offers Himself again on our altars in a bloodless immolation. " In the divine sacrifice offered up at Mass, says the Council of Trent, the Christ there present who is immolated bloodlessly is the self same Christ who once

---

are useful for our salvation. Propitiation has then a negative aspect which consists in an efficacy peculiar to propitiation alone, while the positive aspect is at the same time the peculiar efficacy of impetration. Impetration, therefore, should be regarded as one of the functions of propitiation. See Lugo, disp. XIX, sect. IX, n. 141.

1. On the origin of this word, see further, p. 482, note 1.

2. Denz., 948 : *Si quis dixerit., in Missa non offerri Deo verum et proprium sacrificium, aut quod offerri non sit aliud, quam nobis Christum ad manducandum dari : A. S.*

offered Himself on the Cross amid shedding of blood[1] ".

But, as can be seen from this declaration, while the Mass is a real, absolute sacrifice, it is not a sacrifice totally independent from that of the Cross. The Council of Trent goes on to state that the Mass is the real representation or the reproduction of the sacrifice of the Cross. In both, the same God-priest offers the same God-victim; the only difference is in the manner of offering. On the Cross the God-priest offered Himself in a bloody manner; on the altar, He offers Himself without the shedding of blood. On the Cross He sacrificed Himself alone without the ministry of priests; on the altar, He sacrifices Himself through the ministry of a priest[2].

If, the Council of Trent continues, the Mass reproduces the sacrifice of the Cross, it is only to commemorate it and to complete it. On the Cross Christ offered and immolated Himself for our redemption, satisfying for our sins and meriting grace for us; on the altar, He offers and immolates Himself in a sacrifice that commemorates the sacrifice of the Cross, and applies the satisfactions and merits that flow therefrom[3]. The sacrifice of the altar commemorates the

---

1. *Ibid.*, 940 : *In divino hoc sacrificio, quod in Missa peragitur, idem ille Christus continetur et incruente immolatur, qui in ara crucis semel se ipsum cruente obtulit.* Cf. Sess. XXII, Decret. de observ. et evit. in celebr. Missæ : *Necessario fatemur nullum aliud opus adeo sanctum ac divinum a Christi fidelibus tractari posse, quam hoc ipsum tremendum mysterium quo vivifica illa hostia, qua Deo Patri reconciliati sumus, in altari per sacerdotes quotidie immolatur.*

2. *Ibid.*, 940 : *Una enim eademque est hostia, idem nunc offerens sacerdotum ministerio, qui se ipsum tunc in cruce obtulit, sola offerendi ratione diversa. Cujus quidem oblationis cruentæ, inquam, fructus per hanc incruentam uberrime percipiuntur; tantum abest, ut illi per hanc quovis modo derogetur.*

3. *Ibid.*, 938 : *Is igitur Deus et Dominus noster, etsi semel se ipsum in ara crucis morte intercedente Deo Patri oblaturus erat, ut æternam illic redemptionem operaretur, quia tamen per mortem sacerdotium ejus exstinguendum non erat, in cœna novissima qua nocte tradebatur, ut dilectæ sponsæ suæ Ecclesiæ visibile, sicut hominum natura exigit, relinqueret*

sacrifice of the Cross, in order to apply its fruits. It is laden with the satisfactions and merits of Calvary. The Cross is the fountain-head; the altar, the stream.

Summing up, then the Mass is a true sacrifice; it consists in reproducing the sacrifice of the Cross in order to commemorate it and thereby to fulfil it. In other words, the Mass is a true sacrifice whose object is the continuation of the sacrifice of the Cross.

We shall first trace this doctrine to its foundation in *Holy Scripture,* and in the *Tradition* of the Fathers. Then we shall study the principal stages of its development throughout the theological period.

I

Holy Scripture

General Idea. — Prefigured long before in the sacrifice of Melchisedech and *announced* by the prophet Malachias, the Eucharistic sacrifice was finally *effected* by Our Savior on the eve of His death. Christ instituted the Eucharist under the form of sacrifice.

The typical sacrifice of Melchisedech. — We read in Genesis that Melchisedech, king of Salem, came to Abraham in the vale of Save, " bringing forth bread and wine, for he

---

sacrificium, quo cruentum illud semel in cruce peragendum repræsentaretur, ejusque memoria in finem usque sæculi permaneret, atque illius salutaris virtus in remissionem eorum, quæ a nobis quotidie committuntur, peccatorum applicaretur, sacerdotem secundum ordinem Melchisedech se in æternum constitutum declarans, corpus et sanguinem suum sub speciebus panis et vini Deo Patri obtulit, ac sub earumdem rerum symbolis, Apostolis, quos tunc Novi Testamenti sacerdotes constituebat, ut sumerent, tradidit, et eisdem eorumque in sacerdotio successoribus, ut offerrent, præcepit per hæc verba : « Hoc facite in meam commemorationem », uti semper Ecclesia catholica intellexit et docuit.

was a priest of the most High God ". He blessed Abraham who gave him the tithes of all that he possessed[1]. From this account, Melchisedech's sacrifice to God must have consisted of bread and wine, for the sacred text clearly states that if Melchisedech brought bread and wine it was because he was a priest of the Most High, i. e. a man whose office it was to offer sacrifice to God; the reason alleged would be meaningless, if the writer did not intend to indicate that in this instance Melchisedech offered to God a sacrifice consisting of bread and wine.

In the other sacred books, Melchisedech was represented as the figure of the Messias priest, and therefore his sacrifice was set forth as the type of the Eucharist. In one of the verses of the psalm *Dixit Dominus,* God says to the Messias-priest : " Thou art a priest forever, according to the order of Melchisedech ", that is to say, like Melchisedech[2]. This is because, as the Epistle to the Hebrews explains, Melchisedech, king of Salem, on account of the meaning of both his name and that of his city, was regarded as the priest of justice and of peace. And since no one knew his genealogy, this priest was looked upon as having neither beginning nor end. Moreover, because Abraham, and, in him, the levitical priest-

---

1. Towards the year 2050 B. C., Abraham, having been commanded by God to leave Chaldea, came with his nephew Lot to settle in the country of Canaan. A dispute arose between the two, and Lot departed one way with his followers, and Abraham, another. The country chosen by Lot was soon ravaged by Chodorlahomor, king of Elam, and his kingly allies, among whom was Amraphel, king of Sennaar, most likely no other that Hammurabi. On hearing of this, Abraham gathered his servants together, to the number of 318, and marched against Chodorlahomor whom he conquered, thus freeing Lot. On returning to his own chosen country, the king of Salem, the future Jerusalem (which means the city of peace), came to him. This king was called Melchisedech (the king of justice), and believed in the one true God. According to the Phœnician custom he was at once king and priest, and offered up to God the sacrifice of bread and wine. He blessed Abraham, who gave him a tithe of all he possessed. See *Gen.* XIV.

2. Ps. C X, 4.

hood, had bowed before him, his priesthood was regarded as of a higher order than that of Levi [1]. Now all these prerogatives were realized in the Messias-priest.

As Melchisedech prefigured Christ, his sacrifice must be the figure of the sacrifice of the Messias, for what chiefly characterizes a priesthood, is the nature of the sacrifice entrusted to it. Now if Christ is a priest according to the order of Melchisedech, it is because His sacrifice is similar to that of the latter; in other words, the sacrifice of Melchisedech prefigured that which the Savior was to offer.

Tradition, likewise, saw in the rite of Melchisedech an intended symbol of the Eucharistic sacrifice. According to St. John Chrysostom, who admirably sums up the entire Christian thought on this point, " Melchisedech was a just man and the figure of Christ. Inspired by the prophetical spirit and understanding what manner of sacrifice was to be offered for the Gentiles, he adored God by offering Him a sacrifice of bread and wine. In so doing he imitated Christ who was to come. Since the Jews were offering to God as victims according to the order of Aaron, not bread and wine, but calves and lambs, and were glorifying Him with bloody sacrifices, God cries out and says to Him who was to be born of the Virgin Mary, Jesus Christ, Son of God : " Thou art a priest forever according to the order of Melchisedech, and not according to that of Aaron, to offer the oblation of bread and wine [2] ".

The prophecy of Malachias. — Besides being foreshadowed in the sacrifice of Melchisedech, the sacrifice of the Eucharist was also foretold by the prophet Malachias.

---

1. *Hebr.*, v, 5-6.

2. *Homil. de Melchisedech*, 3; *P. G.*, LVI, 261. According to an old Rabbinical tradition, the Jews, at the time of Our Lord, believed that the Messias would abolish all the levitical sacrifices, preserving, as the one sacrifice, that of bread and wine, as offered in the beginning by Melchisedech. Quoted by Corluy, *Specilegium*, t. II, p. 421.

In the time of Nehemias, about 445 B. C., both priests and people, poor and indifferent, offered only " polluted " victims. God complained of this by the mouth of His prophet Malachias. Shut rather the doors of the temple, He said, than enkindling my altars in vain. " I have no pleasure in you... and I will not receive a gift of your hand ". Then wishing to emphasize His displeasure, God added : " My name is great among the Gentiles, and in every place there is offered to my name, incense and sacrifices, a clean oblation[1].

There are two theories concerning what is meant by the *clean oblation* offered to God by the Gentiles and throughout the world.

According to liberal Protestants, the clean oblation mentioned by Malachias, designates the pagan sacrifices made in all sincerity to the false gods. God would have considered Himself more honored by these than by the sacrifices of the Jews.

In support of this solution, it is pointed out that Malachias speaks in the present. He refers, then, to a sacrifice existing in his own time. Moreover, by placing the unacceptable Jewish sacrifices in opposition to those other acceptable sacrifices, he clearly shows that the two must have been celebrated at one and the same time, and consequently the latter must be the sacrifices of the pagans.

Whoever is at all acquainted with the prophetical method will find this reason very weak. A prophet usually places the present and the future in the same perspective. In criticizing one institution he often compares it to another which he represents as already existing, whereas, most often, it exists only in his hopes[2].

Catholic theologians, on the contrary, never hesitated

---

1. *Malach.*, I, 6-14.

2. See A. Van Hoonacker, *Les douze petits prophètes, Malachie*, pp. 711-714.

to see in the discourse of Malachias a prophecy of the Eucharistic sacrifice.

In truth, we must admit that, upon reading of this pure oblation offered everywhere and most pleasing to God, which is in some way to replace the Jewish sacrifices, we think immediately of the Eucharistic sacrifice.

Hence, from the very beginning, according to the *Didache,* the sacrifice of the Eucharist was said to be the realization of the prophecy of Malachias[1]. The Fathers frequently quoted this passage to prove to the Jews that the Eucharistic sacrifice had supplanted the levitical one[2]. *The Council of Trent,* while it did not define it, yet adopted this opinion as its own[3].

The Savior instituted the Eucharist as a sacrifice. — A precise declaration of the sacrificial character of the Eucharist is found in the New Testament.

The account of the institution expresses it very clearly.

Taking bread, the Savior blessed and broke it, and gave it to His Apostles, saying : " Take ye and eat, this is my body ", " which is given for you ", according to the account of St. Luke[4], or only, " for you ", according to the account of St. Paul[5]. These last words would not suffice to establish the sacrificial character of the Eucharist. Then the Savior took the cup of wine, blessed and gave it to His Apostles, saying : " Drink ye all of this; this is my blood »[6]. Here the sacrificial character is clearly expressed. Our Lord offers His body and blood separately, thus presenting Himself as an immolated victim. Moreover He explains in that sense the rite He has just accomplished. This blood, He says,

---

1. *Didach.*, XIV.
2. See JUSTIN, *Dial.*, XLI, CXVII.
3. DENZ., 939.
4. LUKE, XXII, 19.
5. *I Cor.*, XI, 24.
6. MATTH., XXVI, 27-28.

is shed[1]. Now according to Leviticus, a sacrifice consisted especially in offering up a life by shedding the blood of the victim[2]. Christ, who evidently referred to the rites of the Old Testament, thus clearly affirms by these words, that the act He is performing is a sacrifice. It is blood shed, and, as He further adds, shed unto the remission of sins[3].

Now, blood shed for the remission of sins constitutes what Leviticus calls the sacrifice of expiation[4]. Our divine Master completes his sentence by saying that this blood shed unto the remission of sins is the blood of the New Covenant[5].

The New Covenant, as the Old, is sealed by a sacrifice. It is true that according to the prophets, the blood of the New Testament was to be the sacrifice of the Cross. Hence the sacrifice of the Eucharist can be a sacrifice, only in as much as it was the sacrifice of the Cross, though anticipated by way of announcement. So also the sacrifice of the Mass is but the sacrifice of the Cross reproduced to commemorate and complete it.

The sacrificial character is no less strongly affirmed in the admonitions addressed by St. Paul to the Corinthians.

We have already seen how, to put an end to abuses connected with the celebration of the Lord's Supper, St. Paul was led to give the account of the institution of the Eucharist[6]. « For as often as you shall eat this bread and drink the chalice, you proclaim the death of the Lord, until he come »[7], he concludes meaning : you celebrate and really represent His death, you reproduce it and recall it to mind. Thus, according to the teaching of the Apostle, the Eucharistic ceremony

---

1. Matth., xxvi, 28. — Mark, xiv, 24. — Luke, xxii, 20.
2. *Lev.*, xvii.
3. Matth., xxvi, 28.
4. *Lev.*, xvi.
5. Matth., xxvi, 28; Mark, xvi, 24; Luke, xxii, 20; I *Cor.*, xi, 25.
6. See above, pp. 227-228.
7. I *Cor.*, xi, 26.

is a memorial of the sacrifice of the Cross, but a memorial that is in itself a sacrifice.

In the same epistle, St. Paul had previously reprimanded certain Christians for heedlessly taking part in the religious banquets of the pagans, during which was eaten flesh offered to idols. Be very careful, he writes, not to act thus. For just as the followers of the Hebrew religion by eating of the sacrificed meat, partook of the altar, i. e. of the sacrifice or act of worship offered on the altar, so, by eating the body of Christ and drinking His blood, we share in the sacrifice of the body and blood of Christ. One eating of the victims immolated to idols would take part in the sacrifice of worship offered to these idols : « you cannot at the same time be partakers of the table of the Lord and of the table of devils[1] ».

The teaching of the Apostle could not be clearer : the Eucharist was instituted as a sacrifice, and is in reality a sacrifice.

In conclusion, let us say that the sacrificial character of the Eucharist is explicitly revealed in Holy Scripture. Foreshadowed and foretold in the Old Testament, this doctrine is taught in the New.

II

TRADITION

General Idea. — Liberal Protestants claim that, no matter what may be St. Paul's teaching concerning the Eucharistic sacrifice, the early Christians saw in the Eucharist only a sacrifice improperly so called. For them, it is held, it was simply as much and no more of a sacrifice than is a prayer or any good work; but gradually, under the influence of the

1. I *Cor.*, x, 14-21.

pagan idea that no religion can exist devoid of sacrifice, it came to be looked upon as a true sacrifice[1]. Let us see the worth of this assertion.

The Apostolic Fathers. — In the *Didache,* mention is made of a Sunday reunion devoted to the *breaking of bread* and *the giving of thanks;* the first act was the confession of sins, « for one must be pure to be able to offer the sacrifice », ὅπως καθαρὰ ἡ θυσία ὑμῶν ᾖ. This sacrifice, it is stated, is the one foretold by God through His prophet Malachias. Also the faithful are enjoined to choose bishops and deacons for the celebration of this sacrifice[2]. The form of this ceremony, the connection established between this rite and the prophecy of Malachias, the injunction to choose bishops and deacons, are so many proofs that there is here a sacrifice properly so called.

St. Ignatius of Antioch speaks in much the same way. The Eucharist is always for him the assembly of the faithful grouped around the bishop for the celebration of the Eucharistic sacrifice[3].

Thus the first Christians saw in the Eucharist not a mere spiritual sacrifice, but a sacrifice in the true meaning of the term, and there is no need to trace to pagan influences the origin of the Catholic doctrine on this point.

The Fathers of the second century. — In his Apology, St. Justin gives us a particularly striking description of the Eucharistic ceremony. It is a reunion of the faithful which opens with reading from the Memoirs of the Apostles or the writings of the Prophets. Then follows a long thanksgiving, said by the bishop, viz., the prayer in which the bread and wine become the body and blood, after which comes the

---

1. Harnack, *History of dogma,* iv, p. 287.
2. *Didache,* xiv-xv.
3. *Smyrn.,* vii, 1; viii, 1-2; *Eph.,* xx, 2; *Philad.,* iv.

communion[1]. This Eucharistic ceremony has all the aspects of a sacrifice : the intention of the bishop is to reproduce the sacrifice of the Cross[2]; it is moreover the sacrifice announced by Malachias[3]. Consequently Tryphon is certainly mistaken when he interprets this prophecy as referring to the prayers and pure oblations offered to God by the Jewish nation in the different parts of the world to which it has spread[4].

St. Irenaeus taught the selfsame doctrine : « (The Savior), » he wrote, « took created bread, gave thanks, and said : This is my body ; and declared that the chalice, which also forms part of the created universe, was His blood. Thus He acquainted us with the new oblation of the new covenant. The church inherited this oblation from the Apostles, and she offers it everywhere to the God who gives us in nourishment a harbinger of the benefactions of the new covenant[5] ».

The Greek Fathers of the third and the fourth century. — Origen[6], St. Denys of Alexandria[7], and St. Athanasius[8] speak of the Eucharist in the same way as St. Irenaeus, and no one can doubt that they see in the celebration of the Eucharist a true sacrifice.

The beautiful anaphorae of the fourth century constitute a most explicit testimony. « Almighty Lord », we read in the anaphora of Serapion, between the trisagion and the account of the institution, « fill this sacrifice with Thy power and Thy participation. For to Thee do we offer this living

---

1. *Apol.*, LXV, LXVII.
2. *Dial.*, XLI, LXX.
3. *Ibid.*, XLI.
4. *Ibid.*, CXVII.
5. *Haeres.*, l. IV, XVII, 5.
6. *In Jer.*, homil. XVIII, 13 ; *P. G.* XIII, 489.
7. Quoted by EUSEBIUS, *H. E.*, l. VII, IX ; *P. G.*, XX, 656.
8. *Sermo de paschate et de sacrosancta eucharistia*, 8 ; *P. G.*, LXXXVI[2], 401.

sacrifice, this bloodless immolation. To Thee do we offer this bread, the figure of the body of the Only-Begotten[1] ».

S. Cyril of Jerusalem describes the entire rite of the Eucharistic sacrifice used in Jerusalem[2], and St. John Chrysostom rises from the consideration of the « mystical sacrifice » of the altars to that of the officiating priest, who is, he says, « a man by whom and in whom God works[3]. »

From Tertullian to St. Gregory the Great. — Tertullian thought that the sacrifice announced by Malachias was a spiritual sacrifice realized in the universal praises given to God by the Christians throughout the world[4].

In another place, however, he invites all Christians to assist, on « station days » at the sacrificial prayers, to present themselves at the altar of God and thus to share by communion, in the sacrifice which is offered[5].

St. Cyprian is, if not more emphatic, certainly more explicit. We have already related the circumstances in which the holy bishop was led to expound the doctrine of the Eucharistic sacrifice[6]. If the chalice lack wine, he writes,

---

1. See Funk, *Didascal. et Constitut.*, t. II. See above, p. 260, note 1.

2. Catech. XXIII (mystag. V); *P. G.*, XXIII, 1124.

3. *De Pentecost.*, homil. 1, 4. See also *In epist. ad Hebr.*, homil. XVII, 13. « It is Christ, our great High Priest, who offers a victim that purifies us. The victim wich we now offer (in the Eucharist) is the same that was once offered (on the Cross), an immortal victim. This we do in memory of what was done; for Christ has said : Do this in commemoration of me ».

4. *Adv. Judaeos*, V ; *P. L.*, II, 608.

5. *De oratione*, XIX ; *P. L.*, I, 1181 : « On station days (i.e., days of fast on which Mass is celebrated), many think that they must abstain from assisting *at the prayers of the sacrifices*, because they fear they will break their fast by eating the body of the Lord. But is the Eucharist irreconcilable with our duties towards God? Does it not, on the contrary, render us more agreeable to Him? And will not the day be much better celebrated if you present yourselves *at the altar of God?* By receiving the body of the Lord, and keeping it in order to eat it later, we both *share in the sacrifice, which is a matter of obligation and fulfil the duty of fasting.* »

6. See above, p. 276.

what is offered is not the sacrifice of the Lord, the sacrifice corresponding to the Passion : *Sanguinem Christi non offerri si desit vinum calici, nec sacrificium Dominicum a legitima sanctificatione celebrari nisi oblatio et sacrificium nostrum responderit passioni*[1]. The wine must, however, be mixed with water; for the sacrifice of the Eucharist is not the sacrifice of Christ alone, but of Christ and of the faithful incorporated into Him. The mixture of wine and water symbolizes this incorporation[2].

St. Ambrose goes much deeper into the subject. " We have seen the Prince of priests coming to us; we have seen and heard Him offering His blood for us..... But if we now no longer see Christ offer Himself, it is He nevertheless, who is offered on earth, when the body of Christ is offered. Nay more, He makes use of us to signify that He offers Himself, and it is His word that sanctifies the sacrifice which is offered[3]. »

To St. Augustine is due the credit of having first understood, or at least having clearly worded the economy of sacrifice. He defines it : « *visibile invisibilis sacrificii sacramentum, id est sacrum signum,* » in other words, the visible, consecrated, sign of an invisible sacrifice[4]. There are two elements in a sacrifice : one, invisible and spiritual, consisting in the interior offering wich man makes of himself to God, the other, visible and material, consisting in the immolation of a victim or merely in a work of exterior mortification. The exterior sacrifice exists only to manifest the interior sacrifice, which should correspond to the exterior one. St. Augustine finds that this definition fits the sacrifice of the Eucharist which he calls the sacrifice of the

---

1. *Epist.* LXIII, 9.
2. *Ibid.*, 13.
3. *In Psalm.* XXXXVIII, 25; *P. L.*, XIV, 1051.
4. *De civit. Dei*, l. X, v; *P. L.*, XLI, 282.

Church[1], because it is a sacrifice in which the Church offers itself together with its Savior[2]. This, he declares, is the true sacrifice pre-figured by those of the Old Law which are now abolished[3]. However, this sacrifice is only relative, that is, commemorative of the sacrifice of the Cross[4].

Beginning with the middle of the fourth century, the doctrine of the Eucharistic sacrifice was explained under all its aspects, speculative and practical. « What is grander than the altar, exclaims St. Maximus of Turin, where sacrifice is offered to God by Christ, priest and victim at the same time for the remission of sins[5]? ». « It is a sacrifice instituted by Christ Himself, teaches St. Isidore, as a perpetual commemoration of His passion and death[6] ». Though a commemorative sacrifice, it is also a real sacrifice, for, as St. Germanus of Paris explains, the victim is really immolated on the altar[7]. Venerable Bede in-

---

1. *Ibid.*, l. X, xx : *In forma servi sacrificium maluit esse quam sumere, ne vel hac occasione quisquam existimaret cuilibet sacrificandum esse creaturæ. Per hoc et sacerdos est, ipse offerens, ipse et oblatio. Cujus rei sacramentum quotidianum esse voluit Ecclesiæ sacrificium.*

2. *Ibid.*, l. X, vi. *In ea re quam offert [Ecclesia], ipsa offeratur.*

3. *Ibid.*, l. XVII, xx, 2.

4. *Contra Faustum*, l. XX, xxi; *P. L.*, XLII, 385 : *Hujus sacrificii caro et sanguis ante adventum Christi per victimas similitudinum promittebatur; in passione Christi per ipsam veritatem reddebatur; post ascensum Christi per sacramentum memoriæ celebratur.*

5. Sermo LXXVII ; *P. L.*, LVII, 689-690 : *Quid reverentius, quid honorabilius dici potest, quam sub illa ara requiescere, in qua Deo sacrificium celebratur..... in qua Dominus est sacerdos..... super aram Christus imponitur..... super altare Domini corpus offertur..... pro peccatoribus Christi sanguis effunditur..... mors Domini quotidie celebratur..... occisionis dominicæ membra ponuntur..... hostia Christus est et sacerdos.*

6. *De eccles. offic.*, l. I, xviii, I; *P. L.*, LXXXIII, 754.

7. *Exposit. brev. liturg. gallic.; P. L.*, LXXII, 94 : *Confractio vero et commixtio corporis Domini tantis mysteriis declarata antiquitus sanctis Patribus fuit, ut dum sacerdos oblationem confrangeret, videbatur quasi angelus Dei membra fulgentis pueri cultro concædere, et sanguinem ejus in calicem excipiendo colligere, ut veracius diceret verbum dicente Domino carnem ejus esse cibum et sanguinem esse potum.*

dicates the wonderful effects of this sacrifice : Just as at the Last Supper and on Calvary, he says, « Christ offers Himself on the altar for the remission of sins[1] ». St. Gregory the Great insists still more upon this aspect. The sacrifice of the Mass, he declares, is useful both for the living and the dead. « Have we not seen a prisoner freed from his chains, because his wife had a Mass said for him, and a ship-wrecked sailor saved in the same way[2] ». A monk named Justus was found after his death in possession of three pieces of gold, an evidence that he had transgressed his rule. St. Gregory had thirty consecutive masess said for him, and on the last day, the monk appeared to a religious, freed from Purgatory[3].

The Mass is a true sacrifice and one endowed with wondrous power, declares the holy Doctor at the end of his Dialogues : « Christ risen from the dead dies no more. But though incorruptible and immortal, He is nevertheless immolated for us again in this mystery of the holy sacrifice of the Mass..... Let us fittingly appreciate this sacrifice, which is the renewal of the sacrifice of the Cross, accomplished for the remission of our sins. Who having faith can doubt it? When, at the word of the priest, Christ offers Himself, the heavens open, choirs of angels surround the altar, and invisible things and the visible mingle into one! But while we do these things, we must immolate ourselves by contrition, because we who celebrate the mystery of the Passion of the Lord, ought to imitate what we do. When

---

1. Homil. XIV; *P. L.*, XCIV, 75 : *Non solum autem lavit nos a peccatis nostris in sanguine suo, quando sanguinem suum dedit in cruce pro nobis..... Lavat itaque nos a peccatis nostris quotidie in sanguine suo, cum ejusdem beatæ passionis ad altare memoria replicatur, cum panis et vini creatura in sacramentum carnis et sanguinis ejus ineffabili Spiritus sanctificatione transfertur.*

2. *Dial.*, l. IV, LVII; *P. L.*, LXXVII, 424.

3. *Ibid.*, LV.

we shall have made victims of ourselves, then shall the sacrifice have been truly offered to God for us[1] ».

III

The age of Theology

General Idea. — The doctrine of the sacrifice of the Mass, as contained in Scripture and Tradition, was first synthesized by the theologians of the Middle Ages. When in the sixteenth century this doctrine was *violently attacked by the Protestants,* the criticisms and adverse theories of the Reformers gave rise to the *canons and decrees of the Council of Trent.*

Theological Synthesis. — Natural law requires that man offer sacrifices to God, and human nature demands that these sacrifices be visible. Essentially, sacrifice is an external testimony of adoration, or of recognition of the sovereignty of God. There are, then, two elements essential to sacrifice : The interior acknowledgment of total dependence of the creature on God, and the external and symbolic

---

1. *Ibid.*, LVII-LIX : *Hæc namque singulariter victima ab æterno interitu animam salvat, quæ illam nobis mortem Unigeniti per mysterium reparat, qui licet resurgens a mortuis, jam non moritur, et mors ei ultra non dominabitur, tamen in semetipso immortaliter atque incorruptibiliter vivens, pro nobis iterum in hoc mysterio sacræ oblationis immolatur. Ejus quippe ibi corpus sumitur, ejus caro in populi salutem partitur, ejus sanguis non jam in manus infidelium, sed in ora fidelium funditur. Hinc ergo pensemus quale sit pro nobis hoc sacrificium, quod pro absolutione nostra passionem unigeniti Filii semper imitatur. Quis enim fidelium habere dubium possit, in ipsa immolationis hora, ad sacerdotis vocem, cælos aperiri, in illo Jesu Christi mysterio angelorum choros adesse, summis ima sociari, terrena cælestibus jungi, unumque ex visibilibus atque invisibilibus fieri? Sed necesse est ut cum hæc agimus, nosmetipsos Deo in cordis contritione mactemus, quia qui passionis dominicæ mysteria celebramus, debemus imitari quod agimus. Tunc ergo vere pro nobis hostia erit Deo, cum nos ipsos hostiam fecerimus.*

expression of this dependence. That which, properly speaking, constitutes the sacrifice, is the symbolic external expression, though we should never separate it from the internal reality which it represents, from the interior act of adoration which renders the sacrifice pleasing to God[1].

Had man not sinned, he would have had to offer to God only a sacrifice of adoration. Since he is a sinner, however, his sacrifice of adoration must also be expiatory.

But sin committed against God bears an infinite malice; therefore the offense could only be repaired by offering to God a homage of infinite value.

In the Old Law a lofty plan of redemption gradually evolved. God prescribed for His people a system of sacrifices some of which were for pure adoration, others for thanksgiving, and still others for expiation. They were pleasing to God, only in as much as they truly expressed the inner sentiments of the heart. They had the power to remit legal faults only because they prefigured and announced a sacrifice that was to come, and would be the supreme sacrifice of adoration, thanksgiving, and expiation. One way of sharing in the sacrifice, prescribed habitually for the priest and used by the faithful in certain instances, was the partaking of the flesh of the victim slain on the altar or of the flour or bread or wine offered in addition to the sacrifice of blood[2].

In due time, the Word of God became flesh to ransom men from the slavery of sin. A single act of the incarnate Word, even one entailing no pain, such as contemplation, or charity, would have sufficed to wash away the stain caused by man's sin[3]. Yet, the Savior offered Himself on the Cross

---

1. *Sum. theol.* II^{a}-II^{ae}, q. LXXXV, a. 1, 2, 4.

2. *Ibid.*, III, q. LXXXII, a. 4 : *Quicumque autem sacrificium offert, debet sacrificii fieri particeps : quia exterius sacrificium, quod offertur, signum est interioris sacrificii, quo quis seipsum offert Deo. Unde per hoc quod participat sacrificio, ostendit ad se sacrificium interius pertinere.*

3. *Ibid.*, III, q. XLVI, a. 2.

of Calvary, meriting by this bloody immolation the grace of our salvation. He thus wished to show, while redeeming us, how greatly He valued a soul, and how much He hated sin, so that we might learn what esteem we should feel for one another and what aversion we should experience for sin; He wished to manifest His great love for us, so as to urge us to love one another in Him[1].

This is how He chose to carry out His purpose : — Since He had come to establish between God and mankind a new covenant which would be the fulfilment of the old, He willed to die in a sacrifice of expiation which would set the seal to the new alliance. Now the sacrifice at Mt. Sinai, which had confirmed the old covenant had been prefigured and announced by the Phase or first Pasch. And annually thereafter " at the set time ", the Pasch had been celebrated in each family " as a memorial " of the " coming forth out of Egypt " and of the covenant entered into by God with His people. — When about to offer His great sacrifice, Jesus, by way of announcing the oblation on Calvary, performed a rite after the manner of the Jewish Pasch. Therein, however, He sacrificed Himself in a mystical immolation; He was the new paschal lamb, His body hidden under the appearances of bread and His blood under those of wine. He commanded His Apostles to receive Him as food and drink and thus made them participate in His sacrifice, made them sacrifice themselves with Him and, so, apply to themselves the satisfaction and merits of the sacrifice of Calvary. Moreover, He commanded these men and their successors to celebrate until the end of time that which He had done, so as to com-

---

1. *Ibid.*, a. 3. The Savior offered Himself in a bloody sacrifice on the Cross, not only in the sense that He accepted a violent death, but also in the sense that though scourged and crucified by His tormentors, it was by an act of His own divine will, in all obedience and love, that He Himself laid down the human life He had assumed, and placed His soul in the hands of His Father.

memorate forever the sacrifice of the new covenant. Such is the economy of the Eucharistic sacrifice[1].

Protestant errors. — Both Luther and Calvin denied the existence of a Eucharistic sacrifice. Their main argument ran thus : the sacrifice of the Cross possessed an infinite value, and there is no need of a complementary sacrifice ; it is illogical or even blasphemous to assert the existence of a Eucharistic sacrifice.

Their real reason, however, for attacking with particular hatred the dogma of the Eucharistic sacrifice, is that it is in direct opposition to their fundamental principle of justification by faith alone. For, as the Church teaches, this sacrifice is the greatest of man's acts, and participation in it by communion is necessary for salvation to those of the faithful who have reached the age of reason ; consequently faith alone does not suffice for justification. The Protestants judged that they must repudiate this act by intimating that it was not what it purported to be, i. e. a real sacrifice, but, at most, a sacrifice improperly so called, simply a rite of praise, of thanksgiving, a mere commemoration of the sacrifice of the Cross, at any rate a work devoid of power to remit the sins of the living or cancel the punishment of the dead.

The Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent. — In face of these attacks, the Council of Trent did not hesitate to define the dogma of the existence of the Eucharistic sacrifice. This it did by means of *canons* which launch anathema at the theories of the Reformers, and of *decrees* which expound the doctrine.

The Council anathematizes whoever dares to claim that the Mass be not a true sacrifice in the proper sense of the word, or that there be some difference between that which is offered, and the Christ who is given to us as food[2],

---

1. *Ibid.* III, q. LXXIII, a. 5, 6.
2. DENZ., 948. See above, pp. 430-432.

It likewise anathematizes whoever calls the Mass a mere sacrifice of praise or thanksgiving, or a simple commemoration of the sacrifice of the Cross, without power to remit sin and punishment, and consequently useless for the living and the dead[1]; and finally anathema is hurled against him who would dare say that the celebration of the sacrifice of the Mass, in the sense in which Catholics understand it, be a blasphemy against God[2].

In the decrees preceding these canons, the Council affirms that the sacrifice of the Mass is the reproduction of the sacrifice of the Cross. He who once offered Himself on the Cross amid shedding of blood, again offers Himself on the altar, this time however, without the shedding of blood and by the ministry of priests[3].

II.

The essential Act of the Eucharistic Sacrifice.

The problem. — In which of the constituent parts of the liturgy of the Mass, is the real sacrifice to be looked for? It certainly is no one of those which precede the consecration; it is not the oblation at the conclusion of the anamnesis, nor is it the breaking of the host, nor the dropping of a particle of the host into the precious blood; neither is it the communion alone. Is it, then, the consecra-

---

1. *Ibid.*, 950 : *Si quis dixerit, Missæ sacrificium tantum esse laudis et gratiarum actionis, aut nudam commemorationem sacrificii in cruce peracti, non autem propitiatorium, vel soli prodesse sumenti, neque pro vivis et defunctis pro peccatis, pœnis, satisfactionibus et aliis necessitatibus offerri debere : A. S.*

2. *Ibid.*, 951 : *Si quis dixerit blasphemiam irrogari sanctissimo Christi sacrificio in cruce peracto per Missæ sacrificium, aut illi per hoc derogari : A. S.*

3. *Ibid.*, 940. See above, pp. 430-432.

tion and the communion together, or just the consecration alone[1]?

Consecration and Communion together. — According to Cardinal Bellarmine, the sacrifice of the Mass consists essentially in the consecration and in the communion of the celebrant : by the consecration, the body and blood of Christ are made present under the appearances of bread and wine, and are thereby placed before God, that is, they are exposed on the altar, which is one of the ways in which things are offered; by the communion, the body and blood of Christ, having assumed, by the consecration, the form of food and drink, are consumed by the priest and thus destroyed, so that the communion of the priest is less the consumption of food and drink than a sacrificial rite corresponding to the burning of the holocaust[2].

Cardinal de Lugo practically espouses Bellarmine's opinion. He too claims that both the consecration and the communion, together, constitute the sacrifice. Still, according to him, the consecration alone could suffice, for it effects already in some way the destruction of the victim in that it places Christ in a minified state. As a matter of fact, he goes on to say, both the consecration and the commuion are of the essence of the sacrifice : the consecration is the

---

1. By " consecration ", we may understand either the words uttered by the priest over the bread and wine (*consecratio in causa*), or the very act of consecration of the bread and wine (*consecratio in actu*). We shall use the term mostly in its second meaning. As such, it is practically synonymous with transubstantiation. Indeed in the theology of the sacrifice of the Mass, as in the liturgy, transubstantiation is most often called consecration.

2. *De Missa*, l. I (*De sacram. euch.*, l. V), XXVII, propos. 7ª : *Comsumptio autem, qua fit a sacerdote sacrificante, non tam est comestio victimæ quam consummatio sacrificii ; et proprie combustionem holocausti respondere censetur. Itaque adeo necessaria semper judicata est ab Ecclesia, ut si forte sacerdos ante consumptionem moriatur, vel alio modo a consumptione impediatur, oporteat alium sacerdotem illi succedere, et sacrificium consummare.*

slaying of the victim, and the communion is, as it were, its total destruction (in the offering of holocausts, under the Old Law, the victim had first to be slain, and afterwards to be totally destroyed by fire[1]).

At present most theologians see the essence of the sacrifice of the Mass in the consecration of the bread and wine alone; communion is but an integral part of the sacrifice[2].

In fact, according to the teaching of the Council of Trent, the sacrifice of the Mass is to be offered *in the name of Christ;* consequently, we must eliminate, as not belonging to the essence of the sacrifice, those actions which the priest performs *in the name of the Church alone.* Again, the sacrifice of the Mass is to be celebrated *according to the rite of Melchisedech;* now he offered bread and wine; therefore those rites which are concerned with *only one species,* for instance that of the bread, cannot be considered as belonging to the essence of the sacrifice. Moreover, the essence of the sacrifice of the Mass must be placed in some act which characterizes the sacrifice as the *living memorial* of the Passion of the Savior, and which renders it a *vivid image* of that Passion; so that the essence of the Eucharistic sacrifice cannot consist, even partially, in an act which is not the *real representation* of the bloody death of our Savior. In this way the Council of Trent enables us to lay down guiding principles for determining the essence of the sacrifice of the Mass.

Since the victim of the sacrifice is the body and blood of Christ under the sensible signs of bread and wine, none of

---

1. *De Euchar.*, disp. XIX, sect. v, 68 : *Cum hoc tamen stat ipsam sumptionem pertinere ad substantiam et integritatem hujus sacrificii; nam per ipsam adhuc magis consumitur et destruitur victima. Nec repugnat aliquam victimam in eodem sacrificio duplicem destructionem subire; imo in holocausto necesse erat victimam prius occidi, postea adhuc magis destrui per totalem combustionem.*

2. Cf. Billuart, *De Eucharistia,* dissert. VIII, a. 1, dico 3° : *Essentia sacrificii Missæ adæquate consistit in consecratione corporis et sanguinis, cum ordine ad sumptionem tamquam ad partem integrantem.*

those acts which precede the consecration, viz., the act by which the body and blood become present under the appearances of bread and wine, belong to the essence of the sacrifice. And should none of the acts which follow the consecration belong to the essence of the sacrifice, we must conclude that the proper sacrificial act or the essence of the sacrifice consists solely in the consecration of the bread and wine.

Now, it can easily be seen that none of the acts intervening between the consecration and communion belongs to the essence of the sacrifice; either they merely explain the rite that has just been performed, such as the offering, which concludes the anamnesis; or they are concerned with but one species, as, for instance the breaking of the host; or they do not render the Mass a true representation of the bloody death of our Savior, as the commingling a particle of the host with the chalice[1]; or, finally, the priest accomplishes these rites in the name of the Church and not in the name of the Savior. That is why the rubrics of the Missal declare that they can be omitted without impairing in any way the essence of the sacrifice[2].

But does the communion of the priest belong to the essence of the sacrifice? We do not think so. First of all, the communion is not made in the name of Christ; next, it is not a representative picture of the Passion, finally, and above all, it possesses nothing to stamp it as a true sacrifice. Bellarmine observes that in the communion, Christ loses His sa-

---

1. Certain Thomists, whose theories are reviewed by John of St. Thomas, *De Eucharistia*, disp. XXXII, a. 1, saw the essential act of the Eucharistic sacrifice in the breaking of the host, and in the commingling a particle of the host with the species of wine, since, to their way of thinking, this twofold rite sufficiently represents the bloody death of the Savior. They are mistaken as to the meaning of this ceremony, which was originally provided to meet certain needs of communion. See, below, p. 493 note, 3.

2. *Miss. roman.*, *De defectibus in celebratione Missarum occurrentibus*, t. III-IV.

cramental existence. But, can he be said to be offering sacrifice to God, who merely consumes food for his own personal good? And the destruction of Christ's sacramental state is in no wise the destruction of a victim. True, De Lugo compares communion to the burning of the holocaust; but his comparison cannot be justified, not even with the allowance that all comparisons limp. Hence the priest's communion does not belong to the essence of the sacrifice of the Mass. The liturgy itself amply indicates this : before and after consecration, all the words and actions breathe of sacrifice; but the ceremonies preceding and preparatory to communion, treat only of the peace which will result from a union of the faithful with Christ [1]. Consequently, the essence of the sacrifice of the Mass is to be sought in the consecration of the bread and wine [2].

---

1. In the Mass of the Presanctified, where there is a communion of the priest, but no consecration, the priest does, it is true, invite the faithful to pray God to accept the sacrifice which is offered to Him. However, all ecclesiastical writers assert that this ceremony is not a sacrifice, just because there is no consecration. And though the priest turns towards the faithful, and asks them to pray God to accept from him and them the spiritual sacrifice which is offered, the faithful do not make the ordinary response used when beseeching God to accept the sacrifice of the body and blood of Christ.

2. Those theologians who maintain that the communion of the priest belongs to the essence of the sacrifice, do not fail to underline the importance in the sacrifices of the Old Testament, of the ritual communion. They have also tried to back their position by the words of St. Paul, who, especially in I *Cor.*, x, 14-21, declares that to eat of the flesh offered on the altar is to participate in the sacrifice. However, as we have already shown (see pp. 226-230), while the Apostle says that to eat the victim offered is to participate in the sacrifice, he does not say that communion is the sacrifice itself. In the Old Law, the ritual communion was complementary to the sacrifice, but it in no way constituted the sacrifice.

Several modern authors affirm that with the Semites, the sacrifice consisted less in the immolation of a victim than in the food offered to the deity by the burning of the immolated victim before the idol or in the drinking of the blood of the deity, by drinking the blood of an immolated *totem*, in order to renew the blood of the tribe. They style these rites *food-sacrifice* or *communion-sacrifice*. We do not deny the existence of these practices among the Semites and elsewhere. Cf. J.-M. Lagrange, *Études sur les religions sémitiques,*

The consecration of the bread and wine, apart from the communion. — How can the sole consecration of the bread and wine be the essential act of the sacrifice of the Mass? This question has received various answers.

The consecration is a sacrifice, says Suarez, because it destroys the substance of the bread, in order to produce the glorious body of Christ. This destruction constitutes the sacrifice. Indeed, the substance alone of the bread and wine is destroyed; but this does not prevent there being a sacrifice, even that of the body of Christ. In the ancient sacrifices, it was not merely the thing destroyed that was offered to God, but also that which resulted from the destruction, such as the smoke of the incense or the fragrance of spices. When the thing destroyed was the more precious, it formed the principal offering. In the other case, in the sacrifice of incense, v. g., it was the higher and more precious element, though not destroyed which was the chief offering[1]. But according to St. Thomas, the consecrati on does not result in the destruction of the substance of the bread, and an act which only ushers in the glorious body of Christ cannot be regarded as sacrificial. Moreover, the explanation given by Suarez seems to rest on somewhat arbitrary assumptions.

Cardinal de Lugo opposes the theory of Suarez, and claims that the consecration is a sacrificial act because it places Christ in a real state of humiliation, *in statu deliviori*[2].

---

ch. VII. However, no serious historian would ever think of lowering the levitical sacrifice to this level.

1. *De Eucharistia*, disp. LXXV, sect. v.

2. *De Eucharistia*, disp. XIX, sect. v, 67 : *Licet* [*corpus Christi*] *ipsa consecratione non destruatur substantialiter, sed tamen destruitur humano modo, quatenus accipit statum deliviorem, et talem, quo reddatur inutile ad usus humanos corporis humani, et aptum ad alios diversos usus per modum cibi; quare humano modo idem est ac si fieret verus panis, et aptaretur ac condiretur in cibum; quæ mutatio sufficiens est ad verum sacrificium; fieri enim comestibile illud, quod non erat comestibile, et ita fieri comestibile ut*

The consecration makes of the body of Christ food and of His blood, drink; which is tantamount to destroying Him. Cardinal Franzelin states that the body of Christ hidden under the species of bread and wine is not physically but morally destroyed, in the sense that it is in such a state of exinanition that it lies as though slain again : the vital activities, at least those of His organic life, are suspended, and the body and blood of Christ, chained to the appearances of bread and wine, are at the mercy of creatures, after the fashion of lifeless food[1].

But it is difficult to reconcile this state of humiliation imposed on our Savior with the impassibility of His glorious body. And, supposing it possible, the reduction of the body of Christ to a state of food for the use of man, is not a sacrifice made to God.

According to Vasquez, the consecration is sacrificial because by it the body and blood of Christ are rendered present under the appearances of bread and wine, and thus the sacrifice of the Cross is represented[2].

Evidently, the representation of a sacrifice cannot constitute a new sacrifice. So if the Mass be nothing but the image of the sacrifice of the Cross, it may be a memorial thereof, but cannot be another sacrifice. Indeed the Mass is and should be a representation of the sacrifice of Calvary, but it is not thereby a sacrifice, anymore than were the sacri-

---

jam non sit utile ad alios usus nisi per modum cibi, major mutatio est quam aliæ quæ ex communi hominum mente sufficiebant ad verum sacrificium.

1. *De Eucharistia*, thes. XVI : *Primogenitus omnis creaturæ... dat seipsum Ecclesiæ suæ per suos ministros sacerdotes constituendum corpore et sanguine suo in tali modo existendi sub speciebus panis ac vini, ut vere sit in statu cibi ac potus; ut [formaliter quatenus constituitur sub his speciebus] desinat omnis actus connaturalis vitæ corporeæ pendens o sensibus; ut nihil secundum corpus possit agere connaturaliter; ut corpus ejus ac sanguis, in quantum præsentia ejus alligatur speciebus, permittatur quodammodo arbitrio creaturarum non secus ac si esset res inanimata.*

2. *In III^am Partem*, disp. CCXXII, VII-XIII.

fices of the Old Law sacrifices, merely because of the fact that they foreshadowed the sacrifice of the Cross.

In the mind of the theologians of the Oratory, what makes the consecration sacrificial is not that it produces the body and blood of Christ under the appearances of bread and wine, but rather the fact that in so doing it lays Him before God on our altars in an exterior state of humiliation and death, which recalls the bloody death on Calvary, in order that we may unite ourselves to Him and pray with Him so that the satisfaction and merits of Calvary be applied to us. This placing Him before God on our altars, and for such a purpose, allows Christ to make of Himself a new offering which is sufficient to constitute a new sacrifice [1].

It has been objected that a newness of the offering does not constitute a new sacrifice; because a sacrifice is essentially an offering made in and by an immolation. The Oratorians replied with the following distinction : when the victim is sacrificed only once, the sacrifice must then consist in an offering made by immolation. When, however, as in the case of our Savior, the same victim which was once offered on the Cross, is sacrificed anew in order to bring to men the fruits of the sacrifice of the Cross, a new offering is sufficient to constitute a new sacrifice.

Lessius [2], whose opinion is followed by Gonet [3], Billuart [4], and Bossuet [5], at least in his *Méditations sur l'Évangile*,

---

1. Ch. de Condren, *The eternal sacrifice*, 3d part, ch. I-II.
2. *In III*am *Partem*, q. LXXXIII, a. 1, dub. 6, n. 32.
3. *Manuale*, t. VI, tract. IV, XII, § 2.
4. *De Eucharistia*, dissert. VIII, a. 2, dico 3°.
5. *Méditations sur l'Évangile, La Cène, LVII*e *Jour :* " Jesus says : *This is my body;* immediately the bread ceases to exist and has become that which He announces is present. He said : *This is my blood*, the chalice no longer holds wine and the contents are now blood. " *Body* " and " *blood* ", is it said, they are separated; yea, separated, the body there, the blood here. The words spoken are the sword, the trenchant blade, which has effected this mystic leaving. In virtue of these words, we really would have, on one side, nothing but the body, and on the other, nothing but the blood; but since the Resurrec-

teaches that the consecration constitutes the sacrifice, because the intrinsic force of the double consecration would have as a result an actual and true shedding of blood on the altar, since, *ex vi verborum,* the consecration of the bread makes really present only the body, and the consecration of the wine, only the blood. If, in reality, the body and blood of Christ are not separated, it is because in the risen, glorified, and impassible Christ, the presence of the body necessarily demands the presence of the blood, and *vice versa.*

This opinion seems exaggerated. It seems excessive also to say that the words of consecration are as a mystical sword which would cause the death of Christ, were this death not otherwise prevented. The effect proper to the consecration is transubstantiation. It does not separate the body and blood of Christ, for such a separation can not take place in a risen, glorified, and impassible body. Also it is repugnant to say that God has attached to some rite a causal power directed towards the production of an impossible result.

A much simpler explanation is that of Cardinal Billot. Since, when offered on our altars, Christ is hidden under the borrowed, inanimate appearances of the bread and wine, to constitute a sacrifice, it suffices, as we stated before, that the victim be offered by being placed, under borrowed appearances, in an exterior state of death, which, on the one hand, represents the former shedding of blood on the Cross, and, on the other, urges the faithful to immolate themselves in their hearts, in token of adoration and thanksgiving, and as an act of impetration and propitiation. The essential act of the Eucharistic sacrifice then consists in the *consecration*

---

tion, Jesus dieth no more, and His body and blood are inseparable. However in order to imprint on this risen Christ the character of the death He once underwent, the words locate them apart, each under a different appearance. Behold, then, clothed with the emblem of death this Jesus who was once our victim by the shedding of His blood, and who is now our victim anew, but in a different way, namely the mystic dissociation of this blood from this body ".

considered, not as really and substantially changing the bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ, but as reducing Christ by the production of this twofold change, to an exterior disjunction of His body and blood, that is, an exterior state of destruction and death. The fact of being present in this state is what Cardinal Billot calls the mystical slaying or immolation of Christ[1].

This explanation differs from that of Vasquez, with which it has often been confused. Vasquez sees the essence of the Eucharistic sacrifice in the mere representation of the sacrifice of the Cross, exhibited by the fact that the body and blood of Christ are presented under the separate species of bread and wine. Cardinal Billot rightly affirms that the representation of the sacrifice of Calvary does not constitute the Eucharistic sacrifice. For him, the Mass essentially consists in the fact that the body and the blood of Christ are present under the separate appearances of bread and wine, so that Christ is sacramentally slain'; in other words, in the fact which is at the bottom of the representation, and not in the representation itself.

Notwithstanding the strong resemblance between Cardinal Billot's explanation and that of the Oratory, there is really a great difference between the two. The Oratorians have it that Christ offers Himself on the altar in a state of humiliation and death. They make no attempt at finding in this state an immolation, which, they say, is no longer neces-

---

1. *De sacrificio Missæ*, th. LIV : *Restat itaque ultima sententia, quam omnino veram existimamus, reponens formalem rationem sacrificii absolute considerati, in mactatione mystica secundum se, id est, in sacramentali separatione sanguinis a corpore, non præcise quia et in quantum repræsentat oblationem crucis, ad sensum Vasquezii ; multo minus, quia et in quantum foret ex sese occisiva Christi, nisi impediretur per aliam causam, ut dicit Lessius ; sed quia et in quantum sistit Christum sub speciebus sacramenti in quodam externo habitu mortis et destructionis, ac per hoc nata est, non secus ac realis destructio victimæ in propria specie, vere et realiter subjectare symbolicam significationem quæ sacrificio propria est.*

sary; they seek, rather, only some sensible marks recalling the sacrifice of Calvary or the complete annihilation fitting to Christ's rôle of intercessor. Cardinal Billot, on the contrary, perceives in this state a mystic immolation, the one wherein Christ offers Himself anew. He holds that as well on the altar as on the Cross, the sacrifice consists in an offering made by means of an immolation, bloody in one case, and merely mystical in the other[1].

Communion an integral part of the sacrifice. — The words of consecration, pronounced by the priest, change the substance of bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ, and thus render this body and blood present under the appearances of bread and wine respectively. In this way the body and blood of Christ are externally separated, and He Himself is reduced to an external state of destruction

---

1. Upon the solution given to this problem depends the answer to the question as to whether the sacrifice of the Mass be valid, when only one species has been consecrated.

Some recent theologians, as Cardinal Gennari (see *Consultations*, 1st part : *Moral*, t. I, consult. LXXXII, pp. 475-485), who are of the opinion of Cardinal Franzelin regarding the nature of the Eucharistic sacrifice, declare that a Mass, celebrated under a single species, is probably valid. Once the words of consecration are pronounced over either the bread or the wine, Christ is present in His entirely; He is offered to God His Father, and placed in a state of abasement which is equivalent to an immolation.

The more common opinion however holds that the sacrifice is invalid when attempted under one species. In fact, in order to realize the sacrifice, Christ must be placed in an exterior state of death and this is accomplished only by the separate consecration of the bread, and the wine. If, for example, writes St. Liguori, the bread alone is consecrated, the body of Christ is indeed present as much as is possible without the blood, but there is no exterior sign of the shedding of this blood, and consequently no sacrifice. See *Theol. mor.*, l. VI, n. 306.

This question can arise only in a case where a priest would by mistake pronounce the words of consecration over bread not wheaten, or over some liquid other than wine. For, if a priest were consciously to pronounce the formula over such bread, and over wine that did not come from the vine, the question of validity would have to be settled from the point of wiew of his intention to do what the Church does. See below, p. 481, note 1.

and death. Thenceforth Christ is offered by a mystic immolation; the sacrifice is accomplished.

It is not, however, totally complete; for Christ willed that the Eucharistic sacrifice be concluded and completed by the Eucharistic communion. This He showed by the way in which He instituted the Eucharist: He rendered Himself present, sacrificed under the appearances of bread and wine, therefore in order to become food and drink.

He has also given an express command to that effect. After having instituted the sacrament, He gave His Apostles this order: "Eat", "drink". Therefore, though not belonging to the essence of the sacrifice, the priest's communion under the two species is the natural complement and the integrating part of the rite [1].

The Savior wished the Eucharistic sacrifice to end by the Eucharistic communion, because the whole Church should share in this sacrifice. On the altar, Christ is no longer alone to offer Himself in a mystic immolation; all the faithful, socially and individually, spiritually sacrifice themselves with Him, thereby to obtain that the satisfactions and merits of the sacrifice of the Cross be applied to them. They must manifest this participation, in an external, official and ritualistic manner. Now, according to the tradition of both the Old and the New Testament, the ritual manner of manifesting participation in a sacrifice is to eat of the slain victim: *Per hoc quod [quis] participat sacrificio, ostendit ad se sacrificium interius pertinere,* in the words of St. Thomas [2]. Hence, the sacrifice of the Mass is complete only when the Church shares in the victim slain on its altars, at least by the com-

---

1. It is also a divine precept confirmed by the decree *De Eucharistia* of the Council of Trent, that the priest communicate under the two species, in order to complete the sacrifice. See DENZ., 875.

The Church prescribes *sub gravi*, that in default of the consecrating priest, any priest, even one not fasting, complete the sacrifice by receiving communion. See ST. LIGUORI, *Theol. Mor.*, l. VI, n. 355.

2. *Sum. theol.*, III, q. LXXXII, a. 4.

munion of its minister. The logical consequence of this teaching is evident. The priest, minister of Christ, is equally minister of the Church : in him and through him the Church and particularly the faithful present at Mass, offer the Holy Sacrifice. The faithful, then, should receive Communion as often as possible, by partaking of the divine Victim under the appearances of bread[1].

The reason for all this is found in the intimate relation existing between the three great mysteries of the Incarnation, the Redemption and the Eucharist. Human nature could be redeemed only by being united with the divinity through the person of the Word, and by offering to God in this divine person an homage of obedience and love pushed even unto the acceptance of an ignominious death on the Cross. But this collective redemption needs to be completed by the individual quickening of each man in particular. To accomplish this, Christ immolates Himself anew, by assuming an external state of death under the appearances of food and drink, in order that each individual may sacrifice himself spiritually with Him and, becoming incorporated into Him by communion, receive the fullness of His divine life[2].

ARTICLE II

Effects of the Eucharistic Sacrifice.

The four effects of the sacrifice of the Eucharist. — Like all sacrifices, the sacrifice of the Mass is essentially *an act of worship;* but it has, moreover, some very special character-

---

1. The Council of Trent desires that the faithful, whenever they assist at Mass, communicate not only spiritually but sacramentally, *non solum spirituali affectu, sed sacramentali etiam Eucharistiæ perceptione.* See Denz., 944.

2. Cf. M.-S. Gillet, *Les harmonies de la Transsubstantiation : sacrement et sacrifice,* 2d article, in *Revue des Sciences philosophiques et théologiques,* 20 avril 1914, pp. 269-283.

istics which make it a thoroughly distinct sacrifice in the plan of our Redemption.

We call it the *Eucharistic* sacrifice, that is, the sacrifice of thanksgiving : just as by the sacrifice of the paschal lamb the Jews thanked God for having delivered His people from the bondage of Egypt, before covenanting with them on Sinai, so by the sacrifice of the Last Supper the Savior thanked God, His Father, for accepting the sacrifice of the Cross as pledge of the new covenant; in other words, for accepting the sacrifice of Calvary as expiation of the sins of men. Hence, the first act of the Savior was to give thanks. And also after His sacrifice was offered, did He give thanks to God His Father. Now the sacrifice of the Mass is an exact reproduction of the Last Supper, performed in order to thank God for His acceptance of the sacrifice of the Cross as reparation for the sins of mankind. Like the sacrifice of the Last Supper, it begins and ends, at least in its essential rite (which is the canon), with an act of thanks rendered to God by Jesus Christ and, through Him and in Him, by the whole Church.

The sacrifice of the Mass is also *propitiatory*. According to Holy Scripture, a propitiatory act is one which placates God and inclines Him to bestow His favors upon us[1]. Now like the sacrifice of the Last Supper, the sacrifice of the Mass is offered for the sins of men ; strictly speaking, it is the sacrifice by which we appropriate the satisfactions and merits of the sacrifice of the Cross. Thus it placates God and inclines Him to give us His blessings : consequently, it is propitiatory. It is even more propitiatory than eucharistic, but as in this sacrifice the thanksgiving qualifies the propitiation, just as circumstances change the substance of

---

1. In Holy Writ, the act just described, is called indifferently *propitiatory* or *expiatory*. Custom has given these two terms a different meaning. Ordinarily, the sacrifice of the Cross alone is called an expiatory work, while the sacrifice of the Eucharist is called a work of propitiation. See above, p. 426, note 1.

our human acts, it is the former which ultimately determinates the sacrifice of the Mass, and gives it its name.

Theologians most frequently teach that the sacrifice of the Mass is *propitiatory, and impetratory :* propitiatory, in as much as it appeases God, i. e. obtains from Him pardon of our sins and the remission of our eternal and temporal punishment; impetratory, in as much as it inclines God to bestow favors upon us, namely, His grace and the temporal blessings useful for salvation. While keeping this distinction, we must not stretch it too far : for it is evident, on the one hand, that a work of propitiation not only causes God's indignation to cease, but also inclines Him towards us, and, on the other, that being as we are in a state of sin, an act of ours can obtain something for us only if it be at the same time an act of propitiation [1].

Hence, the sacrifice of the Mass has four ends or four principal effects : it is a work of *adoration*, *thanksgiving*, *propitiation* and *impetration*. The first two effects contribute directly to the glory of God : the two effects of propitiation and impetration concern immediately the good of the faithful or of the departed souls [2].

---

1. Cardinal Billot does not admit any distinction between the propitiatory and impetratory nature of the sacrifice of the Mass. See *De sacrificio Missæ*, th. LV. Besides, to express the fact that the sacrifice of the Mass appeases God and at the same time inclines Him to give us His blessings, the Council of Trent uses merely the expression, *propitiatory sacrifice*. See Sess. XXII, cap. II and can. 3. (Denz., 940, 950).

2. The sacrifice of the Mass can be offered to God alone, and only to adore Him, thank Him, appease Him and move Him to bestow His favors upon us.

However, the Mass is often offered in honor of the saints, that is, to honor their memory in general, or that of their acts in particular (for instance their martyrdom) and to thank God for the graces He has bestowed upon them.

Thus in the *secret* of the Mass of Sts. *Basilides*, *Cyrinus*, *Nabor* and *Nazarius* (on June 12) we say : *Pro sanctorum tuorum Basilidis, Cyrini, Naboris atque Nazarii sanguine venerando, hostias tibi, Domine, solemniter immolamus, tua mirabilia pertractantes : per quem talis est perfecta victoria.*

It was indeed by this sacrifice, in which they saw the real representation

We shall first of all sketch *the history of this doctrine*, then describe its *denial by the Protestants*, and the corresponding *definition of the Council of Trent*. Finally we shall investigate *the nature of the efficacy of the Eucharistic sacrifice* and *the extent of this efficacy*.

History of the doctrine. — The Church's belief in the effects of the sacrifice of the Mass is as ancient as her faith in the Eucharistic sacrifice itself.

According to the very words of the institution, the blood

---

and commemoration of the sacrifice of the Cross, that the saints sanctified themselves, and we cannot do better, in honoring them, than offer up that sacrifice which obtained for them so many graces.

Moreover the saints owe to God all that they are; whatever wisdom or courage characterized them, was but a manifestation of the power and wisdom of God. To honor the saints, then, is to honor God. The saints do not rate otherwise the honor we pay them, and it is especially this which causes them to desire homage from us. See BOSSUET, *Explication de quelques difficultés sur les prières de la Messe*, XL.

The Mass is also offered to implore the intercession of the saints, that is, to obtain from God, through Jesus Christ, the one and only Mediator, that He inspire the saints to intercede for us in heaven.

Hence, in the *oblation* we address God in this wise : *Suscipe, sancta Trinitas , hanc oblationem, quam tibi offerimus... in honorem sanctorum... ut illi pro nobis intercedere dignentur in cœlis, quorum memoriam agimus in terris. Per eumdem Christum Dominum nostrum.*

We should observe that it is through Jesus Christ that we implore God to move the saints to intercede for us. For their part, the saints direct their prayers to God only in Christ and through Christ. So the doctrine of the intercession of the saints in no way impairs the doctrine of Christ's supreme Mediatorship of intercession.

But, one might say, why ask God through His divine Son to inspire the saints to intercede for us in Jesus Christ and through Jesus Christ? Why not ask directly through Jesus Christ, for whatever we need? The reason for this is not different from the one which moves us to ask our friends to pray for us. It is contained in the doctrine of the communion of saints, that is, in that bond of union which God has established between the faithful on earth and the saints in heaven. God particulary desires this relationship to be expressed in deeds, and He receives most kindly the prayers, addressed to Him through Jesus Christ, asking Him to have the saints intercede for us. See BOSSUET, *op. cit.*, XXXIX.

Likewise, the Mass is offered to thank the saints for their intercession, that is, to thank God, through Jesus Christ, the sole Mediator of thanksgiving

of Christ is shed for the remission of sins[1]. Thus the Eucharistic sacrifice effects the remission of sins.

Now St. Justin tells us that in the celebration of the Eucharist, we give thanks to God for having created the world, and for having delivered us from the slavery of the demon by the death of His Son[2]. The sacrifice of the Mass is, then, a special means of thanking God for having saved men through Jesus Christ.

Tertullian relates that, in his time, widows, on the anniversary of their husband's death, offered bread and wine in the name of the departed, in order that the sacrifice of the Christian community might be offered especially for the repose of his soul[3].

So it is evident from these testimonies that from the second and especially from the third century, the Eucharistic ceremony was considered both as a sacrifice of thanksgiving and as a sacrifice of propitiation.

This belief developed and became more precise in the subsequent periods. In explaining the text of the anaphora of Jerusalem, St. Cyril of Jerusalem teaches a very complete doctrine on the effects of the Eucharistic sacrifice. In the first place, he says, the Church gives thanks to God for having permitted the redemption and sanctification of

---

as well as of prayer, for having moved the saints to pray for us. The saints see in this thanksgiving which they have provoked by their intercession, a thankfulness which is highly pleasing to them.

Finally, it happens that we offer the sacrifice through the ministry of angels and saints, as for instance, in the secret of the Mass of the Commemoration of St. Paul (June 30) : *Apostoli tui Pauli precibus, Domine, plebis tuae dona sanctifica, ut quae tibi tuo grata sunt instituto, gratiora fiant patrocinio supplicantis.* We do not mean to associate to Jesus another mediator, as though His mediation were insufficient, but since Our Savior wishes us to be mediators with Him, we, cognizant of our own insufficiency, are adjoining a mediator to ourselves, in order to make our sacrifice more agreeable to God. See Bossuet, *op. cit.*, XXXIX.

1. See Matth., xxvi, 28.

2. Dial., xli.

3. *De monogamia*, x. See Labauche, *Man*, p. 311, n. 1.

men. After the thanksgiving comes the adoration; the faithful united to the priest and, with them, the angels and all creatures sing the *trisagion* : Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of hosts. Then is said the epiclesis or prayer invoking God to send down His Spirit upon the offerings. Afterwards, continues St. Cyril, « when the spiritual sacrifice is completed, and the unbloody offering has been made to God by means of the host of expiation, we pray Him for the universal peace of the Church and of the whole world, for emperors and their armies, for our kin, for the sick and the afflicted, and for all those who have need of help. Not only are we concerned with the living, but also with the dead : we think of the Patriarchs, the Prophets, the Apostles, the Martyrs, and we beg God graciously to accept our prayers in view of the merits of their intercession; we pray for the holy Fathers and for all the bishops who are dead; finally, we pray for all those who, while on this earth, were with us and of our communion, persuaded that their souls are greatly comforted by the prayers we offer for them in this holy and wonderful sacrifice which is offered on the altar [1] ». In brief, according to St. Cyril, on the one hand, the effects of the sacrifice of the Mass are to give thanks to God, and to worship Him and, on the other, it is a sacrifice wherein we pray, in union with the immolated victim, for the living and the dead. Here indeed, is given complete instruction concerning the four effects of the Eucharistic sacrifice.

Passing from the Church of Jerusalem to the Church of Africa, we find St. Augustine testifying in favor of the same doctrine. In the ninth book of his *Confessions*, he quotes the last words of his mother, St. Monica : « Place this poor body anywhere to rest; this only I ask of you, that you remember me at the altar of the Lord [2] ». Elsewhere St. Augustine recalls the practice of Judas Machabaeus, who

1. Catech. XXIII (mystag. V), v; *P. G.*, XXXIII, 1124.
2. Conf., l. IX, c. XI; *P. L.*, XXXII, 775.

according to the teaching of the Synagogue, caused sacrifices to be offered for the sins of dead soldiers, and he declares that were this practice not even mentioned in Scripture, it would nevertheless be justified by the authority of the universal Church, which prescribes that the dead be mentioned by the priest in the course of the Mass[1].

St. Gregory the Great, summing up with utmost precision the entire teaching of Tradition, expounded the doctrine of the propitiatory and impetratory effects of the sacrifice of the Mass[2]. The Eucharistic sacrifice, he teaches, obtains for the living and the dead the remission of their sins. This he proves by relating two facts. For the living this sacrifice procures also the spiritual or even the temporal blessings of which they stand in need. In support of this affirmation, St. Gregory again relates some instances[3].

We have already seen how practically all the efforts of the theologians of the Middle Ages were directed towards the study of the Eucharist as a sacrament. As regards the doctrine of the effects of the Eucharistic sacrifice, they did

---

1. *De cura pro mortuis gerenda*, 3; *P. L.*, XL, 593.

2. See above pp. 444-445.

3. From the earliest times the Church has offered the Eucharistic sacrifice in honor of the saints. On the anniversary of the death of martyrs, the faithful gathered near their tombs and celebrated the holy mysteries in their memory. This practice existed in the second century, and was quite general in the third and fourth. About the year 390, the Manichaean Faustus of Milevis attacked the practice of honoring the saints, and called it idolatry. « They go, he says, to the tombs of their martyrs, and honor them as though they were gods. Then they assemble in a nearby place and partake of a funeral repast, just as do the pagans who gather together near the tombs of their dead parents for a sacred meal, and offer food to the shades of their dead ». St. Augustine thus refuted Faustus : the Eucharist is not offered to the martyrs, but to God, to thank Him for the graces bestowed on these martyrs; the reunion is intended so stir up the faithful to an imitation of the courageous conduct of the martyrs. So that they also may deserve the felicity these deceased already enjoy. As to the funeral repasts he would like that they be done away with. See *Contra Faustum*, l. XX, c. XXI. This latter practice did, in fact, gradually disappear. Then was introduced the custom of celebrating likewise the Eucharist, to honor saints who were not martyrs.

little more than repeat the teaching of the Fathers. Yet a certain number of questions remained to be treated : first of all, the relation between the effects of the sacrifice of the Mass and those of the sacrifice of the Cross; then, the nature and extent of the efficacy of the Eucharistic sacrifice.

The former of these two questions was settled by the Fathers of the Council of Trent, when condemning the errors of the Protestants. The second, more difficult and complex, has most often been only indirectly and superficially studied.

The opposition of the sixteenth century Reformers. — The Reformers taught that the sacrifice of the Cross, possessing an infinite value, was all-sufficing in itself and had no need of a complementary sacrifice; to assert the existence of any such complementary sacrifice would to be to declare that the sacrifice of the Cross was imperfect, which would be tantamount to a blasphemy; at most, the Mass was a sacrifice of praise, of thanksgiving, a simple commemoration of the sacrifice of the Cross, or a ceremony intended to produce the body and blood of the Lord on the altar, in order that they might be received by the faithful in communion; and no one should dare represent that rite as a propitiatory sacrifice for the living and the dead, a sacrifice offered for the remission of sin and its punishment, and for the obtaining of spiritual and temporal gifts. They asked what was the sense of saying Mass in honor of the Saints, or, what they considered much worse, to obtain the intercession of the Saints : did not recourse to the mediation of the Saints imply a disparagement of the uniqueness of Christ's sole and universal mediatorship?

Thus the Protestants misunderstood or more exactly appeared to misunderstand the entire plan of the sacrifice of the Eucharist. Our purpose in offering this sacrifice is not to add new merits or satisfactions to the sacrifice of Christ, as though His sacrifice had been insufficient, but merely to appropriate the satisfactions and merits of the sacrifice of the

Cross. The sacrifice of the Mass is a sacrifice which applies the satisfactions and merits of the great sacrifice of Calvary. It does not claim to be anything else. Why, then, could not this application be made in favor of the living as well as of the dead? Likewise, why should not the Mass be offered to God in honor of the Saints, that is, to honor their memory and to thank God for the graces He has given them? And why could we not offer this sacrifice to ask God, through Our Lord, to move the Saints to pray for us? Dare the Protestants impute to us the gross mistake of offering Mass, not to God, but to the Saints, or of rejecting, when we solicit the intercession of the Saints, the mediation of Christ, the sole Mediator of intercession?

In point of fact the Protestants, — at least those of the sixteenth century, — were by no means ignorant of this catholic teaching. But as it was opposed to their fundamental principle of justification without works, they attempted to repudiate that work which all Tradition had presented as the most efficacious means of justification.

The definition of the Council of Trent. — The assertions of the Reformers were condemned by the Council of Trent.

The Mass, the Fathers declared, is efficacious as an act of propitiation in as much as it applies the fruits of the Sacrifice of the Cross. No slight whatever is cast on the infinite value of the sacrifice of Calvary[1]. Anathema be he who would dare hold anything contrary[2].

Consequently, the Fathers added, this sacrifice can be offered to God for the living, as expiation for their sins, as substitute for their punishment, in place of their personal satisfactions, for their other necessities, and also for those who

---

1. Denz., 940 : *Cujus quidem oblationis cruentæ, inquam, fructus per hanc incruentam uberrime percipiuntur; tantum abest ut illi per hanc quovis modo derogetur.*

2. *Ibid.*, 951 : *Si quis dixerit blasphemiam irrogari sanctissimo Christi sacrificio in cruce peracto per Missæ sacrificium, aut illi per hoc derogari · A. S.*

have died in Christ, but have not yet fully undergone their temporal punishment in Purgatory[1]. He who denies this doctrine is also anathematized[2].

And it is a pious custom to celebrate Mass in honor of the saints, or in order to obtain their intercession[3]. Whoever rejects this practice is also anathematized[4].

The efficacy of the Eucharistic sacrifice. — The Sacraments produce grace in virtue of power conferred by God. They possess, though not of themselves, the power to give grace, and that in a transitory manner, i. e. during the time in which God, through and in His minister, uses them for that purpose; they are instrumental efficient causes of grace. Is it in this manner that the sacrifice of the Mass produces its effects?

The sacraments act directly on man for the purpose of producing or developing grace in him. Consequently, they can be and are efficient causes of grace. The sacrifice of the Mass, on the contrary, is directly concerned with God, to adore Him, to thank Him, to appease Him and to incline Him to bestow His favors on us. It cannot, then, act, as an efficient cause, but only as a prayer, i. e., an act by which we

---

1. *Ibid.*, 940 : *Quare non solum pro fidelium vivorum peccatis, pœnis, satisfactionibus et aliis necessitatibus, sed et pro defunctis in Christo nondum ad plenum purgatis rite juxta Apostolorum traditionem offertur.*

2. *Ibid.*, 950 : *Si quis dixerit Missæ sacrificium tantum esse laudis et gratiarum actionis, aut nudam commemorationem sacrificii in cruce peracti, non autem propitiatorium, vel soli prodesse sumenti, neque pro vivis et defunctis, pro peccatis, pœnis, satisfactionibus et aliis necessitatibus offerri debere : A. S.*

3. *Ibid.*, 941 : *Et quamvis in honorem et memoriam Sanctorum nonnullas interdum Missas Ecclesia celebrare consueverit, non tamen illis sacrificium offerri docet, sed Deo soli, qui illos coronavit; unde nec sacerdos dicere solet : Offero tibi sacrificium Petre, vel Paule, sed Deo, de illorum victoriis gratias agens, eorum patrocinia implorat, ut ipsi pro nobis intercedere dignentur in cœlis, quorum memoriam facimus in terris.*

4. *Ibid.*, 952 : *Si quis dixerit imposturam esse, Missas celebrare in honorem Sanctorum, et pro illorum intercessione apud Deum obtinenda, sicut Ecclesia intendit : A. S.*

elevate our heart and mind to God, to render Him our homages and implore of Him that which we need[1].

Moreover the sacraments are instrumental efficient causes, *ex opere operato,* that is to say, they produce their effects, on those who oppose no obstacle, by the mere fact that the rite is performed, and, consequently, independently of the good or bad dispositions of the minister. We may ask whether the sacrifice of the Eucharistic always possesses the same efficacy, or whether this efficacy depends upon the devotion of the minister who celebrates? In other words, does it work *ex opere operato* or *ex opere operantis?*

The sacrifice of the Mass is always efficacious *ex opere operato*. For the principal minister of this sacrifice is Christ; and, the sacrifice of the Mass cannot fail to be an excellent work, no matter how bad be the dispositions of the celebrant, whom Christ employs as His minister. *Quamvis opus operans aliquando sit immundum, semper tamen opus operatum est mundum,* says Pope Innocent III[2].

The Council of Trent has defined that the sacrifice of the Mass is an act the value of which cannot be altered by the unworthiness of the minister who offers it[3].

However, as we have already said[4], the sacrifice of the Mass is also a sacrifice in which the Church offers herself with her Savior, by the ministry of the priest. So the priest is at once the minister of Christ and the minister of the Church.

---

1. Thus it happens that in accord with scriptural expressions — which have now passed into our liturgy — we say of sacrifices, that we carry them up to God, raise them as far as Heaven, make them reach to the very throne of God so that He will accept them. Hence, in the ritual of the ancient sacrifices, — which practice has been preserved in the rite of the Eucharistic sacrifice, — the immolated victim was raised on high as if to send it to God, and thus beg Him to receive it. See Bossuet, *Explication de quelques difficultés sur les prières de la Messe,* XXXVIII.

2. See *De sacro altaris mysterio,* l. III, c. v; *P. L.,* CCXVII, 844.

3. Denz., 939 : *Et hæc quidem illa munda oblatio est, quæ nulla indignitate aut malitia offerentium inquinari potest.*

4. See above, pp. 460-461.

The act which the Church performs by her minister is, not efficacious *ex opere operato,* but *ex opere operantis Ecclesiæ,* that is to say, because of the sanctity of the Church. This same can be totally wanting, for example, if the priest who celebrates has been excommunicated by the Church, in other words, is a priest whom the Church does not wish to recognize as her minister.

Since it is efficacious *ad modum orationis, ex opere operato* and *ex opere operantis Ecclesiæ*, the holy sacrifice of the Mass, like the sacraments, produces its effects of propitiation and impetration *without fail,* whenever there be no obstacle : it infallibly remits the punishment of the souls in Purgatory ; and for the living who are well disposed, it procures the grace of contrition, or if they be in the state of grace, it obtains the remission of their temporal punishment, takes the place of the satisfactions demanded by the justice of God, and procures for them the spiritual or temporal blessings that are necessary or useful for salvation.

The extent of this efficacy. — After having studied the efficacy of the Eucharistic sacrifice in itself, we have now to determine its extension. First of all we shall set down the *subjective extension*, in others words, we will determine just who can receive the fruits of the Mass.

Let us remember that, as living representation of the sacrifice of the Cross, the sacrifice of the Mass is our supreme act of adoration of God; consequently the Mass is *latreutic.*

Moreover, as it is the act by which we thank God for having saved men by Jesus Christ, and for having, by our incorporation into Christ, applied to each one of us in particular, the fruits of salvation, the Mass is *thanksgiving* or *eucharistic.*

And finally, the Mass is *propitiatory* and *impetratory* for *all the living faithful,* namely, for all those who, by the reception of baptism, have become members of the body of the Church. Is it propitiatory and impetratory for those

outside the body of the Church? If we speak of *direct application* of the Mass considered as both the *opus operatum Christi* and the *opus operantis Ecclesiæ*, assuredly no; for, the Eucharistic sacrifice is special property of the Church, and cannot be offered directly for those who are clearly outside the Church. But since the Holy sacrifice is offered for the welfare and propagation of the Church, those who are outside and have good intentions, may *indirectly* profit by it, by receiving actual graces of conversion[1].

It is also propitiatory for the souls of Purgatory. There is no need, it seems, to make a distinction between those who, when they died, belonged to the body and soul of the Church, and those who belonged only to the soul of the Church. We speak of all those who died in the state of grace and who consequently are a part of the Church suffering.

Now, precisely what are the benefits derived from the holy sacrifice by the above named persons? — in technical terms, what is the *objective extension* of the efficacy of the Eucharistic sacrifice?

The Council of Trent, has declared that the sacrifice of

---

1. In practice, the Church is less strict :

a) The Church allows Mass to be said for the conversion of infidels.

b) As regards the excommunicated, Mass may not be offered *specially* for the *vitandi*, neither during their lifetime — unless it be for their conversion (Cf. Cod. J. C., can. 2262 — nor after their death : *private* Mass is allowed, on condition that there be no danger of scandal, for the *tolerati*.

c) The older canon law did not allow a Mass to be said *ratione stipendii*, for *deceased* heretics or schismatics. A decree of the Holy Office, in 1837, forbade Mass to be said *ratione stipendii*, for a Greek schismatic, unless it were evident that it was requested for his conversion. This decree was also applied to heretics, as for instance to Protestants. The new canon law is much broader : Since heretics and schismatics are excommunicated, they are treated only as such. See *Cod. J. C.*, can. 809, 2262.

d) A priest can always offer his Mass *secondarily* for any one he may choose, whether it be an excommunicated *vitandus*, or a heretic or a schismatic. See C. Gennari, *Consultations*, Part 1 : *Morale*, vol. II, consult. CXXXIII, p. 421, 422.

the Mass may be offered for the *sins, punishment, satisfactions*, and *all other necessities of the living.*

Thus, as regards the living, the holy sacrifice may be offered in order that contrition for their *sins* may be brought about; it may be offered for the temporal *punishment due their sins*, which otherwise would have to be undergone here on earth or in Purgatory; it can likewise be offered for the *satisfaction* or works of penance the faithful would want to perform here below to obtain the remission of their temporal punishment; finally, it can be offered for *all the other necessities of the faithful*, that is to obtain particular spiritual, or temporal blessings, on condition that they tend to their salvation.

The Council further declared that the sacrifice of the Mass may be offered for *the dead*, to obtain remission of the temporal punishment due to their sins, which they are expiating in Purgatory. Hence, the Mass can either deliver the souls from Purgatory, or else hasten their liberation.

One more question remains to be settled : in what measure does the Mass procure those benefits? or, what is the *quantitative extent* of the fruits of the sacrifice?

Considered in the Victim, or in the chief Priest who offers it, the sacrifice of the Mass possesses an infinite value of propitiation and impetration. And the satisfactions and merits of the sacrifice of the Cross, for the application of which Mass is celebrated, are infinite. So, the mystery of the altar, considered in itself, is of infinite value.

Since the Mass, by itself, possesses an infinite value, we see no reason why God would, by any law, limit its efficacy. Hence, the efficacy of the Mass can be limited only either by the lack of proper dispositions on the part of those for whom it is offered, or by reason of the manner in which it is directed or applied by the celebrant; when the dispositions or devotion of those who receive the fruits of the Mass are equally fervent, the measure of the fruits depends on the manner in which the priest applies the Mass; when

application is made with the same fervor by the priest, the measure of the fruits is in proportion to the dispositions or devotion of those who receive them. As regards the dead, — for whom, as we are soon to explain, the minister *specially* offers the holy sacrifice, — their capacity to receive corresponds to their present charity and to the devotion which led them, while on earth, to insure the celebration of Masses after their death. In the case of the living, it is naturally easier to rate the capacity to receive : it is consequent upon their external participation in the holy sacrifice, i.e. their securing the Mass by donating a stipend, their assistance at the Mass, and their interior participation or interior dispositions of faith, charity and penance.

But, when the sacrifice of the Mass is offered for many, does it procure for each one as many advantages as though it were offered for one alone?

One application is included in the holy sacrifice itself. This one does not call for a distinct act on the part of the minister, but is realized by the sole fact that the priest has the intention to celebrate the holy sacrifice according to the rite of its institution. This application is twofold : first of all, for the whole Church suffering and militant (the general fruit) ; and then, for the priest who celebrates (the *very special fruit*). There is no question concerning these two fruits, since they are contained in the sacrifice itself and are necessarily always the same.

The question is restricted to that *special* application which depends upon the free will of the priest, and to which corresponds the *special fruit.* Now, Mass offered for many would obtain for each the same benefit as though it were offered for one, if in either case it could be equally applied. But, this is impossible, for the application depends entirely upon the free will of the priest, and necessarily follows the law of all human acts whereby an act that has many objects at the same time, cannot embrace each one of them in the same degree. So that when the priest applies his Mass *spe-*

cially to several persons, each one will receive less than if it were offered for him alone[1].

ARTICLE III

The Minister of the Eucharistic Sacrifice.

Doctrine of the Church. — On the Cross, our divine Savior immolated Himself, and, in doing this, offered Himself to God, His Father, for the sins of men. He was at the same time priest and victim.

On the altar, it is likewise He who offers Himself in an unbloody and mystic manner to call down upon us the satisfactions and merits of the sacrifice of Calvary; *Idem nunc (scilicet in altari) offerens... qui seipsum tunc in cruce obtulit*, as the Council of Trent defined it[2]. He is still priest and victim.

Only, in this case, He has associated to Himself a man

---

1. See L. Billot, *De Eucharistia*, th. LVI. The opposite thesis has been maintained by several authors, and especially by St. Liguori, who claimed that a Mass *specially* offered for many persons obtains for each just as much fruit as it would procure for a single beneficiary. See *Theol. moral.*, *De Eucharistia*, n. 312. The Church has not set about, and perhaps never will, to settle this controversy. However, Pope Alexander VII condemned the proposition : « It would not be contrary to justice, to accept an offering for several masses and then to say only one ». See Denz., 1110.

It follows that a priest who accepts a stipend for the holy sacrifice to be *specially* aplied to one person must strictly hold to the arrangement. Still, nothing prevents him from adding, if he wishes to, one or more *secondary applications* to this *special application*, that is, he may have together with his *special intentions* one or more *secondary intentions*. In such a case, however, it is in his own name and as a private individual that he offers Mass and not as a public personage, or in the name of the Church; so these secondary applications, when efficacious, are such, not *ex opere operantis Ecclesiæ* but *ex opere operantis sacerdotis*. See C. Gennari, *Consultations*, part. I, *Morale*, t. II, consult. CXXXIII, pp. 423-424. Let us add that they are the more fruitful according as the dispositions of the officiating priest are more perfect. See Thom. Aq., *Sum. theol.*, III, q. lxxxii, a. 6.

2. Denz, 940.

with whom He has shared His priesthood, and it is by his ministry that He renews His sacrifice : *Idem nunc offerens, sacerdotum ministerio,* added the Fathers of the Council[1]. Also, on our altars, the Savior no longer is alone in His sacrifice : the entire Church spiritually offers and sacrifices herself with Him. Just as the Savior renews His sacrifice through the ministry of the priest, so the Church becomes sacrificed with the divine victim, by the ministry of the priest. At the altar, the priest is the minister of Christ and, at the same time, the minister of the Church.

In order to state this doctrine precisely we shall have to analyse, as much as is possible, this twofold ministry of the priest at the altar. Then we shall study the obligations of the priest relatively to the Eucharistic sacrifice.

The priest at the altar, minister of Christ and minister of the Church. — The priesthood of the new covenant essentially consists in the power of Christ to sacrifice Himself for the salvation of the human race. This power is based on the divine stamp which was impressed on the sacred humanity of the Savior by the sacerdotal anointing which took place at the moment of the Incarnation. In the selfsame moment when God the Father said to the incarnate Word : " Thou art my Son ", He also said : " Thou art the eternal Priest "[2].

Consecrated priest at the very instant of His entry into the world, our Savior then began His long sacrifice. He offered Himself by accepting a humanity that was subject to suffering and death; He offered Himself by embracing poverty in all its forms; He offered Himself by undergoing all the fatigues and pains of a human life. In the end He offered Himself on the Cross in a bloody sacrifice, immolating Himself, in this sense that while He was scourged and crucified by His executioners, He freely laid down, by an act of both His divine and human will, the life He had

1. *Ibid.*
2. *Hebr.*, IV, 5-6. See THOMASSIN, *De Incarnatione Verbi,* l. X, c. IX.

received in His Incarnation. And by this long period of sacrifice which ended with the immolation on Calvary, our Savior redeemed the world from the slavery of sin.

Men must, however, individually appropriate to themselves, the satisfactions and merits of the sacrifice of the Cross. To do this they must sacrifice themselves with their Savior; and this is the reason why Christ renews the sacrifice of the Cross by the sacrifice of the altar[1].

In one and the other case, a Divine Priest offers a Divine Victim. On the altar, however, the Savior no longer is alone in His offering and immolation; He has joined to Himself one whom He has marked with His own priestly character. He has given him of His own special power to sacrifice Himself for the salvation of men — at the altar, then, the priest acts in the name of Christ. More than this, on the altar as well as on the Cross, it is Christ Himself, who offers and sacrifices Himself. At the moment of consecration, Christ is in His priest; He acts through and with His priest; by the voice of His priest, and with His priest, He says over the bread and wine the words of the Last Supper : " This is my body; This is my blood ". Thus the priest acts in the name of Christ and is in His hands; he is Christ's minister, both morally, in that he represents Him, and physically, in that his action is effective only by Christ, who uses him as His instrument. In this way is the priest, the minister of Christ[2].

On the altar not only is our Savior no longer alone to offer and immolate, but He is no longer the sole « victim »; the whole Church, we have said, offers and sacrifices herself with Him. The Church performs this sacrifice of herself through her priests, who are also priests of Jesus Christ.

---

1. Cf. Thomassin, *op. et loc cit.*, c. xix. — Bossuet, *Exposition de la doctrine de l'Église catholique sur les matières de controverse*, XIV.

2. Cf. J.-J. Olier, *Traité des saints Ordres*, 3e partie, ch. iv. — S.-M. Giraud, *Prêtre et Hostie*, t. I, l. II, ch. ii.

Those only are her priests who, besides being called by God, have been called by the Church, for whom the Church has authenticated their divine call; and who have been then ordained by her bishops[1]. On the altar they act in her name just as they act in the name of Christ. She acts in, by, and with them, but in the manner in which any moral body can act in, by, and with its representative. The entire liturgical ceremony of the Mass is enacted by the priest *ex opere operantis Ecclesiæ*. This does not, however, altogether deprive the priest of his individual personality, and while celebrating Mass he can make certain private applications, which have value *ex opere operantis sacerdotis*. In this way is the priest the minister of the Church.

The obligations of the priest relatively to the Eucharistic sacrifice. — By the very fact of his priesthood, a priest is bound to say Holy Mass, unless hindered by a legitimate obstacle. This obligation is based on the power of orders, which he received by sacerdotal ordination : this power was given to be exercised.

What is the scope of this obligation? A decree by the Congregation of the Council in 1696, declared a priest who does not celebrate Mass at least three or four times in the year guilty of a mortal sin and liable to punishment by his bishop[2].

According to the common opinion, a priest commits a grave sin if, without sufficient reason, he fails to say Mass for six consecutive months; he is guilty of venial sin if he does not say Mass on Sundays and on holy days of obligation.

---

1. It is a far cry from this doctrine to that of Luther, who claimed that every Christian is capable of celebrating the holy mysteries, by the mere fact of being designated by the people for this purpose. To celebrate the sacrifice of the Eucharist, one must have received the power of orders. Christ alone possesses this power as His own, and the priests and bishops alone are made participants of it. The Protestant doctrine has been condemned by the Council of Trent. See DENZ., 960.

2. See A. TANQUEREY, *Synopsis, De Eucharistia,* n. 132.

These rules refer to the simple priest. One having charge of souls, v. g. a pastor, falls under still other obligations; for instance, he is *bound, sub gravi,* to say Mass for his parishioners on Sundays and holy days of obligation. This obligation is *personal,* that is, it falls upon the pastor in person, except in the cases foreseen by law; *binding on a fixed day,* except in cases determined by law; *local,* meaning that the Mass is to be said in the parish church, unless the pastor be lawfully absent. It is real, personal, and binding as to time, before it is local, that is, it does not cease, even though the pastor be absent (*cessante loco*); it is real and personal, before binding as to time, and therefore must be fulfilled even though the day has passed (*cessante die*); it is real before it is personal, which means that it must at any rate be met.

If we consider the obligations of the priest concerning the celebration itself of the Holy Sacrifice, it is evident that he must entirely conform to the liturgy prescribed by the Church. For he is performing a public and not a private function : the Church makes use of his ministry in order that in him, by him, and with him, she may sacrifice herself together with the Savior[1].

Moreover, he must have the intention of doing just what the Church does; that is, he must intend to celebrate the sacrifice of the Last Supper in the manner it was instituted by Christ. This intention must be both external and sufficiently interior. It must be exterior, that is, consist in the

---

1. The priest can say certain prayers for himself, for the living at the first *Memento,* and for the dead, at the second. Likewise, after the communion, the priest can recollect himself, and pray for a moment, according to the rubrics of the Missal. But outside of these two instances, he must recite the liturgical prayers, in succession, and without interrupting them, by the introduction, for example, of any short devotional prayers, or even mere ejaculation. See Gennari, *Consultations,* part III : *Liturgie,* t. V, consult. LXI, pp. 201-203.

desire to do exteriorly just what the Church wishes done[1]; it must be sufficiently internal, that is, the priest must really intend in his heart adequately to perform the sacrifice instituted by the Savior. A priest who, while intending to do externally what the Church does, would have an inner desire positively contrary to the will of the Church would not validly consecrate[2]. If not actual, this exterior and interior intention of the celebrant should at least be virtual. A virtual intention is sufficiently maintained by the fact that a priest every morning, or nearly every morning, strives duly to say Mass.

Mass, we have said, is celebrated for the entire Church, for the celebrant, and for the one or for those whom the priest specially designates, namely, (in most cases), he or those who, by giving an offering, have requested a Mass. The application of the Mass to the needs of the entire Church and to those of the celebrant is contained in the actual liturgy of the Mass; so the celebrant need have no fears on that score. The special application, however, must be made by the celebrant, at least before the consecration of the wine[3].

---

1. What is to be thought of a priest who, not able to celebrate Mass for lack of wine, would pronounce the words of consecration over hosts in order to give communion to the faithful?

The act of this priest has no consecrating effect, because he lacks at least external intention. In fact, whatever be the interior intentions of the priest, he certainly has not the intention to do *externally* what the Church does. What the Church intends to do and what she wishes her ministers to intend also, is to consecrate separately the bread and wine. See A. Boudinhon, *Revue du Clergé Français,* t. LXXVI, p. 724.

2. This would happen in the case when a bad priest, passing before some baskets of bread, would pronounce over the loaves the words of consecration. The ridiculous circumstances of this design or purpose are incompatible with an *internal* desire to do what the Church does. See A. Boudinhon, *Revue du Clergé Français,* t. LXXIV, p. 489. Moreover, in this second case, the exterior intention is evidently more wanting than in the preceding case (of consecrating hosts alone). This shows what little importance is to be attached to certain absurd tales told by some unbelievers, in attempt, doubtless, to justify their incredulity.

3. When a priest carefully keeps a note-book of the Masses to be said day by day, he may consider this as sufficient manifestation of his special intention. It is best, however, to renew the special intention, along with his private inten-

ARTICLE IV

The Liturgy of the Mass[1].

The three principal parts of the Mass. — The present Roman Mass contains three very distinct parts.

The first part contains the prayers said by the priest and the ministers, or merely the server, at the foot of the altar, and is called the *preparation for Mass.*

The second part extends from the *introit* to the anthem called *offertory,* and constitutes the *Mass of the catechumens.* It is so called because in the early Church the catechumens, or candidates for baptism, were admitted to

---

tions, before Mass, and to heed the invitation of the liturgy, and recall the special intention and all private intentions, either in the *Memento* of the living, or the *Memento* of the dead, according to the subject of the intention.

1. From the very beginning, the ceremony of the renewal of the Last Supper was sometimes called the *Eucharist,* and sometimes the *breaking of bread.* This was undoubtedly because in instituting the sacrifice, the Savior began by giving thanks, and then broke bread. Soon the name of *Eucharist* predominated. In reality, the sacrifice of the Eucharist is, like the sacrifice of the Cross, a sacrifice unto the remission of sin. But, as we have already explained above, (see p. 462), it is an expiatory sacrifice which is characterized by the fact that it is offered in thanksgiving.

As early as the fourth century, the sacrifice of the Eucharist was quite commonly called the *sacrifice of the Mass,* or simply, the *Mass.* Immediately before the oblation, the deacon dismissed the catechumens, the penitents, and those possessed, as being unworthy to assist at the sacrifice properly so called. In doing so, he said, just as to-day, « *Ite missa est :* Go, the dismissal is pronounced it, is time to depart ». At this period of low Latin, the word *missa* was used for *missio,* as was *oblata* for *oblatio,* and *secreta* for *secretio.* At the end of the ceremony, the deacon likewise dismissed the faithful, using the same formula. No one of the faithful was supposed to leave before this had been said. These dismissals made a deep impression upon the people, who consequently began to call the sacrifice by the terms used in the dismissal. In this way the Eucharistic ceremony came te be called the *ceremony of the Masses, missas facere,* and *missarum solemnia.* From these the name of *sacrifice of the Mass,* or *Mass* was derived. See Bossuet, *Explication de quelques difficultés sur les prières de la Messe.* II.

this part of the sacrifice alone. This constituted their « mass ». The Mass of the catechumens is also styled *Fore-Mass*, not only because it precedes the true Mass, but also because it is a preparation for the true Mass, for both the priest and the faithful.

The third part extends from the *Offertory* to the *Ite missa est.* This is the *Mass of the faithful,* the sacrifice itself.

We intend to explain these three parts of the actual Roman Mass, showing especially according to what order each of them was formed. We shall begin with the Mass of the faithful.

The Mass of the faithful. — The Mass of the faithful contains three parts : the *oblation* which consists in the offering of the bread and wine; the *sacrificial act* or *sacrifice* properly so called; and the *thanksgiving* which concludes the Mass.

The oblation goes from the Offertory to the Preface[1]; the sacrifice extends from the preface to the ablutions, and the thanksgiving, from the ablutions to the end of the ceremony.

The oblation and the thanksgiving exist only in view of the sacrifice : The oblation is its preparation, the thanksgiving, its conclusion. As a consequence, the sacrifice has inspired the liturgy of the oblation, and that of the thanksgiving. It is important, then, to understand first of all, the liturgy of the sacrificial act or sacrifice.

There are in it two parts which should be carefully distinguished : the offering of the victim by a mystical immolation, and the external and ritual participation in the sacrifice through communion. The former constitutes, as we have already pointed out, the very essence of the sacri-

1. The entire oblation is often called *offertory,* because of the prayer with which it opens.

fice. The latter, or communion (at least the communion of the priest) is its natural complement, its integral part, as is commonly said.

The liturgical formulas used in the offering and mystical immolation of the victim are called by the Greeks, *anaphora* (from ἀναφέρω, elevate, or offer). In the Latin Church, they are more commonly called the *canon* of the Mass (from κανών, rule); in fact, they are the invariable formulas to be followed in the consecration of the bread and wine; so they truly constitute the rule of consecration.

This anaphora or canon goes from the Preface to the *Pater*. The prayers to be recited in connection with the communion, that is, from the *Pater* to the ablutions, have received no special name, but are simply called the *prayers of the communion.*

Interpolations in the canon of the present Roman Mass. — In all liturgies, both Oriental and Western, the canon of the Mass calls for an account of the Last Supper, an efficacious account wherein the words of the Savior : « This is my body; this is my blood », pronounced by the priest over the bread and wine, really produce that which they denote, just as though the Savior pronounced them Himself. Also, in all liturgies, the canon opens with a preface, in which God is thanked for His blessings, and ends with a doxology, in which, again out of gratitude for His favors, all honor and glory are rendered to God. These two points are common to all canons of the Mass, in no matter what liturgy.

The actual canon of the Roman Mass, both in its fixed and movable[1] parts, was determined a long time ago. It has remained unchanged since the time of St. Gregory the

1. Certain parts of the canon of the present Roman Mass, the preface, the *Communicantes*, and the *Hanc igitur* vary, as known, on feast days.

Great, at the beginning of the seventh century, and only slight alterations are attributed to him.

Would it be possible to trace the canon back to its origin? to reconstruct the original canon, the one closest to Apostolic times? Such a one would surely allow us to grasp the dominant idea, and it would then be an easy matter to show how, little by little, the canon of the Roman Mass came to be what it is to-day.

The first part of this work has been admirably done in our day by Dom Cagin, a benedictine of the abbey of Solesmes[1].

In all liturgies of the West, except that of Rome, as well as in all the Eastern liturgies, the preface is immediately followed by the account of the Last Supper. In the Roman rite, there are long prayers between the preface and the *Qui pridie quam pateretur*. First of all, there is the *Sanctus*, then the *Te igitur* group which ends with the words, *Per eumdem Christum Dominum nostrum. Amen.* Next comes the *Hanc igitur* group. After the consecration, the Eucharistic prayer is again broken by the *Memento* for the dead, which ends : *Per Christum Dominum nostrum.* This fact, according to Dom Cagin, is sufficient warrant for saying that all these prayers particular to the Roman canon, are adventitious and of a late date. The primitive canon would

---

1. See A. Vigourel, in *Chronique de Liturgie, Rev. prat. d'Apol.*, May 1, 1915. We call attention also to the latest work of Dom Cagin : *Eucharistia. Le Canon primitif de la Messe*, Paris, 1912. — Father Vigourel's recent work, *Le Canon romain de la Messe et la critique moderne*, goes further still; after reconstructing the primitive canon, he points out that this canon, besides becoming by successive additions our present-day canon, brought on and affected the development of the other parts of the Mass. The present Mass is shown to be a series of prayers which represent successive accretions according to a wondrous scheme which was only slowly, and sometimes unknown to the faithful, realized; all the prayers tend to, as well as spring from, the thanksgiving addressed to God the Father by Jesus and, in Him and through Him, by the Church militant, while renewing the sacrifice of the Last Supper in order to reproduce and fulfil the sacrifice of Calvary.

then consist only of the *Qui pridie,* the *Unde et memores,* the two prayers *Supra quæ propitio,* and *Supplices,* followed by the doxology, *Per quem hæc omnia*[1].

This conclusion which is the result of a mere comparison, seems to be established, as firmly as is possible, by Dom Cagin's masterly confrontation of documents, — a model of critical work.

The anaphora of Verona is part of some fragmentary Latin palimpsests, found at Verona, which belonged to a fifth century collection called the *Apostolic Constitutions.* Comparing it with the anaphora of four other Oriental collections of the same period, Dom Cagin noticed that the anaphora of Verona is found in substance in that of the four Oriental writings, where it is surrounded by a context which evidently was added gradually for the purpose of developing it or of emphasizing its principal ideas by new formulas. On the other hand, a study of those texts shows that no one is a copy of the others. Dom Cagin concludes, therefore, that the anaphora of Verona must come very near the original or Apostolic anaphora[2].

Now, in the Verona anaphora, the preface is immediately followed by the account of the Last Supper. Moreoever, after the consecration, the Eucharistic prayer is not interrupted by the *Memento of the dead.* This second argument is conclusive. It proves, as much as is possible in such matters, that the particular prayers of the Roman canon are accidental, of relatively recent introduction[3].

---

1. See *Eucharistia,* pp. 3-83.

2. See *Eucharistia,* pp. 148 and ff.

3. The following is a translation of the anaphora of Verona, published in 1900, by E. Hauler, *Didascaliæ Apostolorum fragmenta veronensia,* pp. 106, etc. « Let the deacons present the oblation to the bishop, who, while imposing hands over it, with the whole presbyterium will give thanks, saying : The Lord be with you! Let all respond : And with thy spirit. — Lift up your hearts! — We have lifted them up to the Lord. — Let us give thanks to the Lord. — It is meet and just.

« And let him continue : We give Thee thanks, God, through Thy well-beloved

The Original Primitive Canon of the Mass. — It is now easy to state the leading thoughts, if not the exact wording, of the early canon of the Mass.

After a short dialogue between the bishop and the faithful the former said :

[PREFACE] *We give Thee thanks, O God, through Jesus Christ, Thy Word, who came down from heaven, was made flesh, suffered, died, rose from the dead, ascended into heaven, and sent us His Spirit;*

[ACCOUNT OF THE LAST SUPPER] *Who, the day before He suffered, took bread, gave thanks and said : " Take ye and eat, this is my body "; and, in like manner, taking the chalice and giving thanks, said : " This is my blood : take it and drink of it. Do this in memory of me ".*

[ANAMNESIS]. *Wherefore, calling to mind the passion of Christ, Thy Son, Our Lord, His resurrection and ascension, we offer Thee, O God, the holy bread of life everlasting, and the chalice of eternal salvation.*

[EPICLESIS]. *And now we beseech Thee, O God, to receive*

Son Jesus Christ, whom, in these last days Thou hast sent as Savior and Redeemer and messenger [angel] of Thy will; who is Thy inseparable Word, through whom Thou hast made all things, and [in whom] Thou art well pleased; [whom] Thou hast sent from heaven into the womb of the Virgin, wherein He became flesh, and appeared to us, Thy Son, being born of the Holy Ghost, and the Virgin; who, doing Thy will and winning for Thee a holy people, streched forth His hands in suffering in order to deliver By His passion those who have believed in Thee.

« Who, when given over to His passion, which He freely accepted in order to destroy death and break the chains of the devil, and trample hell under foot, and enlighten the just, and assign an end [to the world]? and manifest the resurrection, took bread, gave thanks, and said, « Take ye and eat, this is my body, which will be broken for you ». Likewise, taking the chalice, He said, « This is my blood, which is shed for you; when you do this, do it in commemoration of me ».

« Wherefore, we, calling to mind His death and resurrection, do offer unto Thee the bread and chalice, giving thanks because Thou hast made us worthy to stand before Thee and serve Thee.

« And we beseech Thee, to send Thy Holy Spirit on the offering of the holy Church, that joining [them] in only one [whole] Thou wouldst give to those who

this offering of Thy holy Church, so that all who partake of it may receive every blessing and grace :

[Doxology]. *And that thus we may praise and glorify Thee through Thy Son Jesus Christ, through whom be all glory and honor to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, now and forever and ever.*

The plan of this canon is very simple. It is a prayer beginning with thanksgiving offered to God through Jesus Christ, and ending with a doxology, equally expressive of gratitude, directed to God through Jesus Christ; in the course of which prayer the mystery of the Redemption is renewed. Thus, although this prayer serves above all to reproduce an expiatory sacrifice, the beginning and end of it are eucharistic. The sacrifice of the altar, like that of the Last Supper, is indeed a sacrifice of propitiation, but with an eucharistic form.

A preface or introduction, — an *illatio* as the Mozarabic liturgy very accurately says, leads up to the account of the Last Supper. This account forms the centre of the Eucharistic prayer, since it is when the priest pronounces the words of institution that the bread and wine are changed into the body and blood of Christ, and that is accomplished the mystical immolation destined to commemorate the immolation of Calvary.

It is indeed in memory of the Passion of the Savior that we again offer to God the pure victim, the holy victim under the appearances of bread and wine, as the canon reminds us in a prayer, which is for that reason called the anamnesis. With this prayer, ends the first part of the canon. The Savior is present on our altars, offering Himself in a mystic immolation in commemoration of the sacrifice of the Cross.

---

communicate, the fullness of the Holy Spirit, in order to strengthen them in the faith in the truth.

« So that we may praise and glorify Thee through Thy Son Jesus Christ, through whom [be] all glory and honor to the Father, and to the Son, with the Holy Ghost, in Thy holy Church, now and for ever and ever. Amen ».

But Christ thus renews and commemorates the sacrifice of the Cross only in order that we may appropriate its fruits, that is, obtain pardon of our sins by a communication of grace. Hence, in another prayer, which, in the anaphora of Verona, seems to be one with the anamnesis, we beg God to accept the Church's offering so that those who partake of it may obtain the plenitude of grace. This prayer, which is related to the communion and not to the consecration, is the epiclesis[1].

---

1. In the epiclesis of the canon of Verona, God is asked to send His Holy Spirit upon the offering of the holy Church, so that, uniting all communicants in one body, He may fill them with the fullness of the Holy Spirit.

This prayer was inspired by the liturgy of the sacrifices of the Old Testament. According to *Leviticus* (see above, pp. 427-429), a ritual manducation of a part of the victim had to follow the immolation in order to express the faithful's participation in the sacrifice and, by this participation, their union with God. All was for the best, when it was certain that the sacrifice had been accepted by God. Sometimes God manifested His acceptance by sending down fire from heaven upon the victim. From this we may easily grasp the significance of the anaphora of Verona. " Send, O God, Thy Holy Spirit upon this victim ", it reads, « as Thou didst once sent down fire upon the ancient sacrifices, so that all who eat, and share in the sacrifice, may be one with one another, as they shall be one with us, and may thus obtain the fullness of grace ».

Drawing from the same scriptural source, the epiclesis of the Roman canon amplifies the idea of the anaphora of Verona. God the Father is asked to have the offering of the Church borne to the heavenly altar by the hands of His Angel i. e. the Holy Ghost, so that He may accept it, and all who partake of it, may, by communing with it, obtain all fullness of the Holy Ghost. In other words, as is explained in a second epiclesis, which seems to be merely a repetition of the first, God is asked to receive the offering, as He was once pleased to accept that of Abel, of Abraham, and that of Calvary, so that all who partake of the victim may have life in God. The epiclesis of the Roman canon, like the canon of Verona, and consequently like the canon of the early Church, refers them exclusively to the communion and not to the consecration.

As we have already seen (see pp. 355-358), from the eighth century on, the Greeks gave a different meaning to the epiclesis. After the account of the Last Supper, the celebrant calls on God the Father to send the Holy Ghost on the bread and wine to transform them into the body and blood of Jesus Christ, and cause the body and the blood to produce their salutary effects in the communicants. There is no need to dilate upon the controversy raised by John Cabasilas in the fourteenth century, to the effect that the words of consecration are not the words of the Savior : " This is my body; this is my blood ", but

All that remains to be done before the divine victim be received in communion is to give glory and honor to God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, through Jesus Christ, for all the blessings bestowed on us. This is done in the doxology which concludes the canon. Together with the epiclesis, the doxology forms the second part of the canon.

The formation of the present Roman canon. — The original canon of the Church was soon developed in various ways as it came under the influence of the separate churches. We are concerned only with the growth of the present canon of the Roman Church. It would be probably easy enough to do the same work for the other canons of the Western Church, and also those of the Eastern Church.

At Rome, the first departure from the original canon was the introduction of the *Sanctus,* which, according to the *Liber Pontificalis,* was made by Sixtus I (130-139)[1]. The *Sanctus* was very easy to attach to the preface; after thanking God through Jesus Christ for the blessings of the crea-

---

the prayer to the Holy Ghost which follows the account of the Last Supper, viz., the epiclesis. In the light of Dom Cagin's work, we can safely say that the Greek epiclesis is not primitive. But could the Greek Fathers have held the erroneous opinion that the epiclesis possessed the consecrative power? The contrary was proved long ago, especially by Bossuet. See *Explication de quelques difficultés sur les prières de la Messe*, XLVI. If, according to certain Greek Fathers, we ask God again, in the epiclesis, to change the offerings into Christ's body and blood, it is because this transformation, though instantaneously effected, can only be expressed with several phrases, and hence requires several prayers. " Since human language is necessarily discursive, writes Dom Cagin, man's explanation of all that is comprised in the sacramental unity of consecration can develop only successively. Hence, it will happen that long after the act has been performed, the intellect, and *a fortiori* the speech of man, will still be recounting what this act was destined to accomplish, what the priest intended it to do, and what it has already effected ". *Paléographie musicale*, t. V, p. 85, Solesmes, 1896. See also S. Salaville, *Épiclèse eucharistique*, in *Dict. de théol. cath.*, t. V, pp. 194-300. — F. Varaine, *L'Épiclèse eucharistique,* thèse, 1910. — P. de Puniet, *L'Epiclèse*, in *Rev. d'Hist. ecclés.*, Jan. 15, 1912. — A. Fortescue, art. *Canon of the Mass* in *Catholic Encyclopedia*, vol. III, pp. 255-267.

1. *Lib. Pontif., ed.* Duchesne, t. I, p. 128.

tion, incarnation, and redemption, an ejaculation of this kind seemed called for, and it must have sprung spontaneously from the hearts of the faithful. It was considered so befitting that its continual use was decided upon.

But how ought it to be linked to the account of the Last Supper? A gap was formed between the *Sanctus* and the *Qui pridie;* then, this began to be filled up in various ways. The Gallican liturgy did it by introducing a short prayer which began with the words, *Benedictus plane,* or *Vere Sanctus,* and was called the *Post-Sanctus*[1]. The Roman liturgy did it by inserting the prayers of our present day canon.

It is very probable that these prayers were not all introduced at one and the same time. Very likely, when the *De Sacramentis* appeared, at the end of the fourth century, there was, as a link between the *Sanctus* and the *Qui pridie*, only one prayer combining both the *Hanc igitur* and *Quam oblationem*[2] *:* for these two prayers are quite similar, especially if we suppress in the first the parenthesis added by St. Gregory the Great[3]. This prayer was used as a secret prayer for the offering of the bread and wine, which, as can be seen from the letter of Pope Innocent I to bishop Decentius, at first took place between the *Sanctus* and the *Qui pridie*[4]. Later, when the oblation was placed outside the " sacrificial action ", the prayer attached to it was retained in

---

1. Cf. *Missale gallicanum vetus*, in Muratori, *Liturgia romana vetus*, t. II, pp. 699 and 704.

2. See *De Sacramentis*, 1. V, 21; *P. L.*, 443.

3. St. Gregory added to the prayer *Hanc igitur* the words : *Diesque nostros in tua pace disponas atq ue ab æterna damnatione nos eripi, et in electorum tuorum jubeas grege numerari*, under the stress, no doubt, of the ravages caused by the Lombard invasions. See L. Duchesne, *Christian Worship*, ch. vi, *The Roman Mass*, p. 176, However, Fortescue thinks that " St. Gregory's addition may very well mean, not that he composed it, but that he joined it to the « Hanc igitur, » having removed it from its original place " *l. c.*, p. 260.

4. Epist. XXV, *ad Decentium*, 5; *P. L.*, XX, 553. Cf. Dom Vandeur, *La Sainte Messe*, p. 191.

its former position and was then used to renew the offering just before the consecration.

From this letter of Pope Innocent I to Bishop Decentius, we can prove that in the beginning of the fifth century, the *Memento* of the living was where it is to-day[1]. It must soon have been headed by the *Te igitur,* which is a sort of *Memento* of the entire living Church, and followed by the *Memento* of the dead, the *Communicantes* being the conclusion for this threefold *Memento.* The entire arrangement thus signified : " We offer Thee this sacrifice, O God, for the living and the dead " (the *Communicantes* contributed : " in communion with the Church triumphant, the blessed Virgin, the Apostles and Martyrs "). In this way the whole Church, the Church militant, the Church suffering, and the Church triumphant, was concerned in the celebration of the great Mystery of the altar.

Later, it was judged better to remove the *Memento* of the dead from this group of prayers and place it after the consecration, right before the doxology. The *Nobis quoque peccatoribus* was inserted after it, because it is a conclusion somewhat similar to the *Communicantes,* and, could, with the *Memento* of the dead, constitute, after the consecration, a series of prayers for the deceased, balancing very well with the prayers for the living grouped before the consecration.

We must also add that the original preface which commemorated the three great mysteries of creation, the incarnation, and redemption, has been divided into almost as many prefaces as there are separate feasts. And thus is explained the formation of the canon of the present Roman Mass. The plan of the early canon has remained intact. The groups of prayers inserted either before or after the

---

1. *Ibid., loc. cit.* Pope Innocent I expressed a wish that the *Memento* of the living be placed after the consecration of the bread and wine, and not before it, as was then the custom. His desire was destined to be frustrated.

consecration, are rather logical developments than mere haphazard additions.

The Communion's Prayers. — We have already seen that the communion, at least the priest's communion, is an integral part of the sacrifice[1]. Communion is the ritual participation of the people in the sacrifice, and the sacrifice is not complete unless the people participate in it. So, immediately after the consecration, we come to the rite of communion.

According to St. Jerome, it was our Savior Himself who taught the Apostles " to dare, each day, during the sacrifice of His body, to say with faith : Our Father "[2]. This at leasts proves that the recitation of the *Pater* before the communion is a very ancient practice. In the beginning it must have been the only prayer; the " daily bread " asked for was understood to be the Eucharist. Gradually other prayers or ceremonies were grouped around the *Pater* such as : the breaking of the host, — the primitive *fractio panis*, — which the bishop performed, in imitation of Christ, after He had given thanks[3]; the kiss of peace, which is the

---

1. See above, pp. 459-461.

2. *Dial. contra Pelag.*, l. III, 15; *P. L.*, XXIII, 662.

3. As we have said (see above, p. 219), the Jews were accustomed to break their bread, and not cut it. Hence, at the Last Supper, after giving thanks, our Savior broke bread, and gave it to His Apostles. This rite was religiously preserved in the primitive Church and indeed gave its name to the Eucharistic sacrifice, (see above, p. 21, and p. 482 note 1) which was first of all called the *breaking of bread.*

When in the course of liturgical development, several prayers and ceremonies grew up between the consecration and the communion, the *fractio* was removed from the consecration and placed before the communion. The greater portion of the species of bread served for the communion of the celebrant, his ministers, and the faithful. A particle was saved for the Mass of the folloving day, in order to show forth more clearly the continuity of the sacrifice.

It was set in the chalice, while the celebrant gave the signal for the kiss of peace by saying : *Pax Domini sit semper vobiscum.* Besides, at the time when the faithful received under the species of wine, when the precious blood

symbol of the unity which should exist between those who approach the holy table. Before St. Gregory the Great, the canon was immediately followed by the kiss of peace, the breaking of bread, the *Pater,* and the communion. It was he who changed the order and placed the *Pater* immediately after the canon[1]. It was he also who added to the *Pater,* the *Libera nos* which is called an *interpretatio,* or gloss, because it is a prayer which develops the last request mentioned in the *Pater.*

The Oblation. — We read in the Gospels that Our Lord took bread and, after giving thanks, broke it and gave it to His disciples saying : Take ye and eat, this is my body ; and having taken the chalice and given thanks, He gave it to them, saying : " Drink ye of this, this is my blood ".

For a long time, the Church did but imitate the act of the Savior and repeat His words. Very early, however, the symbolism of the bread and wine was understood. St. Justin and St. Irenaeus, relate that bread and a cup of wine in which a little water has been dropped, in conformity to the Jewish rite and the practice of Our Savior, are brought to the bishop[2]. The water that is mixed with the wine, writes St. Cyprian, as well as the water that is used in the making of bread, symbolizes the people, while the wine and flour represent Christ. This is because not Christ alone, nor the faithful alone, are sacrificed on our altars, but all the faithful united with Him[3].

---

had all been consumed, wine was placed in the chalice and, to sanctify it, a particle of a newly consecrated host, was dropped into it. When communion under the species of wine disappeared, as well as the custom of preserving a particle for the next service, the second mixture was alone kept, but was located where the first belonged. See Dom VANDEUR, *The holy Mass,* pp. 131-134.

1. Epist., XII; *P. L.*, LXXVII, 957.
2. *Apol.*, LXV, LXVII, — *Haer.*, l. V, II, 3.
3. Epist., LXIII, 13.

We have seen above how the prayer over the bread and wine was introduced into the canon, and how this formula, though remaining in the canon, then changed its meaning, (when the oblation was removed from the canon). This change must have taken place, during the first two decades of the fifth century.

Up to the eleventh century there was only one prayer recited over the bread and wine. In this prayer, God was asked favorably to receive this offering of bread and wine, and to send His grace into the hearts of those who shared in the sacrifice, in order that they also might become agreeable offerings in His sight. This prayer was simply called the *prayer over the offerings, oratio super oblata,* or, the *secret,* either because it was recited after the catechumens had been separated from the faithful, *post secretionem* (according to the latin of the period, *post secretam*) *catechumenorum,* or because it was said over the bread and wine destined for the sacrifice, after these had been separated from the bread and wine offered by the faithful, *post secretionem* (*secretam oblatorum*[1].

Thus, the secret was recited after the offering made by the faithful. At first this offering was made in silence. It was St. Augustine who introduced the offertory, and St. Gregory the Great who gave it its special form. It consisted of an anthem and several verses of psalms, which were chanted. The anthem was repeated after each verse. It was concluded when the priest said : " *Orate, fratres :* Brethren, pray ". When the offering ceased to exist, only the chanting of the anthem remained.

Gradually other prayers which preceded the secret and developed its meaning grew up around the oblation. At first, after the oblation of the bread and wine, the prayer *Veni sanctificator,* and the prayer *Suscipe, sancta Trinitas,*

---

1. See J. Grancolas, *Traité de la Messe*, p. 92.

were recited, to beseech God to accept the offering. Then, each offering came to be accompanied by a separate prayer; the prayer *Suscipe, sancte Pater*, was said for the oblation of bread, and the prayer *Offerimus,* for the offering of wine, while the prayer *Deus, qui humanæ substantiæ* accompanied the preceding mixture of wine and water. The prayer *Veni, sanctificator* and *Suscipe, sancta Trinitas,* were then transferred and placed after the prayers *Suscipe, sancte Pater*, and *Offerimus*. The result of all this was a collection of well organized prayers, all having for their object the offering of the bread and wine, and called the *little canon* because of its resemblance to the canon properly so called[1].

By thus being enlarged, the ceremony of the oblation assumed completely the appearance of a sacrifice, whose sublime symbolism was magnificently brought forth. Therein was seen the renewal of the sacrifice of Melchisedech, which was destined to prepare the sacrifice of the Eucharist. Bossuet, rehearsing an idea of St. Cyprian, interprets the oblation as signifying the act by which the Church is united to the Savior in view of the Eucharistic sacrifice wherein she is to sacrifice herself with Him in order to appropriate to herself the gifts of salvation[2].

To-day, before reciting the secret (which sums up all this liturgy, to which it has given rise), that is to say between the *Veni sanctificator* and the *Suscipe, Sancta Trinitas*, the celebrant washes his hands. This ceremony formerly took place, naturally enough, after the separation of the oblations intended for use in the sacrifice.

The Thanksgiving. — The name *ablutions* is applied to the purification of the chalice and of the fingers of the cele-

---

1. See P. Le Brun, *Explication des prières et des cérémonies de la Messe*, t. I, pp. 283-382.

2. *Explication de quelques difficultés sur les prières de la Messe*, xxxvi.

brant which have touched the body and blood of Our Lord. As we have said, the thanksgiving goes from these ablutions to the very end of the Mass.

During the ablutions the celebrant recites the two magnificent prayers of thanksgiving which begin *Quod ore sumpsimus,* and *Corpus tuum, Domine, quod sumpsi.* Formerly these prayers were said, not at the ablutions, but after the communion of the entire assembly.

The celebrant then retires to the Epistle side and says the antiphon called the *communion.* In the ancient Masses it invariably consisted in a verse of a psalm. Until the eleventh century it was chanted during the communion of the faithful, together with the psalm from which it was taken. The priest then reads another prayer, called *Postcommunion* because it follows the communion. According to some liturgists, it is the concluding prayer, *oratio ad complendum,* in which all the other prayers of the thanksgiving are summarized in a single highly expressive formula.

The Mass of the Catechumens. — On the Sabbath day, the Jews were accustomed to gather together in their synagogues, where the doctors of the law read passages from the books of Moses and from the Prophets. The purpose of all this was to enlighten the faithful and to move them to repentance for their sins.

The early Christians kept up this practice, but adapted it to the new religion. " On the day which is called Sunday ", writes St. Justin, " all, in cities as well as in the country, gather together in one place. The Memoirs of the Apostles (Gospels, and Epistles) and the writings of the Prophets are read as long as time permits. When the reading is ended, he who presides over the assembly delivers an address in which he admonishes and exhorts the faithful to imitate these beautiful models. This is followed by the Eucharist[1] ".

1. *Apol.,* LXVII.

Thus, the preparation for the divine sacrifice consisted in readings from and commentaries upon the holy Books; the end intended was the enlightenment and purification of the faithful[1].

As the Church became more and more organized, this preparatory rite assumed greater importance and soon became the Mass of the catechumens. When the catechumenate ceased to exist, it underwent new changes, and gradually developed into the ceremony that we have to day.

It begins with the *Introit,* which is often, particularly in ancient Masses, a verse borrowed from some psalm. In the early Church the entire psalm was then chanted; at present, only the verse remains. The *Introit* contains a brief exposition of the mystery or feast of the day.

After the *Introit,* the celebrant says the *Kyrie eleison* and the *Gloria in excelsis.* The former is the remnant of the litany that used to be chanted during the procession to the *Station* of the day, that is, to the basilica where the Holy Sacrifice was to be offered. This litany was said before the *Introit,* and the psalm of the *Introit* must have been the last of the psalms recited after the litany. The *Gloria in excelsis* was, at first, said only at Christmas, in beginning the midnight Mass. In it God the Father is praised and adored and thanked because of His glory; and God the Son is asked to render effective in all hearts the blessing of the Redemption.

The celebrant next recites the *Collect.* This is the prayer which was formerly said after the faithful had come together, *post collectionem* (or, according to the latin of the period, *post collectam*), whence the name *Collect.*

A study of their structure and development, or *cursus,* of their wondrous spirituality, and profound doctrine reveals

---

1. See H. Laboureau, *La Messe au cours des Ages*, ch. II, pp. 39-50, Paris, 1914.

the fact that many of the oldest of these *Collects* are veritable masterpieces.

Finally there comes the reading of the *Epistle* and the *Gospel*. The Epistle is taken from the Old Testament, or from the Acts of the Apostles, and most generally from the Epistles, as can be gleaned from the generic name of *Epistle* applied to this lesson. The Epistle and Gospel are always chosen so as to furnish instruction on the mystery or feast of the day. These two readings are separated from each other by the *Gradual*, the *Alleluia* with its verse, or the *Tract*. On certain days, the celebrant recites the *Credo*, after the Gospel, a practice which was first begun at Constantinople, in the year 510[1].

In short, the Mass of the catechumens has remained, what it was in the beginning, a preparation for the Mass strictly so called. Certain prayers have been added to the readings from the sacred Books, in order to obtain more fully the double end intended, namely, the enlightenment of the faithful and the purifying of those who were to participate in the Holy Sacrifice.

As it is, the Mass of the catechumens is a magnificent meditation, the "adoration" of which is contained in the *Introit;* the considerations to be made, in the Epistle or Gospel; and petition in the Collect, the Secret and Postcommunion.

The Preparation for Mass. — This preparation is of recent date. It is composed of the *sign of the Cross*, the antiphon *Introibo* with the psalm *Judica me,* the *Confiteor* with the invocations at the end, and the two prayers *Aufer a nobis,* and *Oremus,* the first of which is said while going up the altar steps, and the second at the altar itself.

As is evident, all these prayers are grouped around the *Confiteor,* to which they are either preparatory or comple-

1. See H. Laboureau, *op. cit.*, 114-120.

mentary. From this we can see that the preparation for Mass is, both for the celebrant and the faithful, a means of purifying the heart before entering upon the Holy Sacrifice.

236
L 112 Three sacraments of initiation / L. Labauche

9223

GRADUATE THEOLOGICAL UNION LIBRARY
BERKELEY, CA 94709